

Editors:  
Udaya Narayana Singh  
P.P Giridhar

Guest Editor:  
Anjali Gera Roy

# Translation Today

This journal is available in electronic version at [www.anukriti.net](http://www.anukriti.net)

Volume 1. Number 2. October 2004

## Editorial Policy

Translation Today is a biannual journal published by Central Institute of Indian Languages, Manasagangotri, Mysore. It is jointly brought out by Sahitya Akademi, New Delhi, National Book Trust, New Delhi, India and Central Institute of Indian Languages, Mysore. It is based on the electronic version available at the URL of [www.anukriti.net](http://www.anukriti.net). A peer-reviewed journal, it proposes to contribute to and enrich the burgeoning discipline of Translation Studies by publishing essays as well as actual translations from and into Indian languages. Translation Today will feature full-length articles about translation and translator-related issues, squibs which throw up a problem or an analytical puzzle without necessarily providing a solution, review articles and reviews of translations and of books on translation, actual translations, Letters to the Editor, and an Index of Translators, Contributors and Authors. It could in the future add new sections like Translators' job market, Translation software market and so on. The problems and puzzles arising out of translation in general, and translation from and into Indian languages in particular will receive greater attention here. However, the journal would not limit itself to dealing with issues involving Indian languages alone.

**Translation Today seeks a spurt in translation activity.**

**It seeks excellence in the translated word.**

**It seeks to further the frontiers of Translation Studies.**

**It seeks to raise a strong awareness about translation and help catalyse a groundswell and a wholesome climate of ideas about translation among people.**

### Contributions:

Translation Today welcomes contributions of articles and other suitable material as elucidated above for its issues in the following areas:

Annotated and original translations of all literary genres, translated excerpts from novels are accepted where they stand on their own, glossaries in any subject in any language-pair (Indian Languages TO Indian Languages or Indian Languages TO English or English TO Indian Languages), specialties in the translation profession: religious, technical, scientific, legal, commercial, specialties in the interpreting profession: court, conference, medical and community, multimedia, terminology, localization, translation technology: HAMT, translation memory softwares, translation teaching softwares, papers on translation as a category of human thought, as a significant dimension of thought, pieces relating translation to society, to culture, to philosophy, to poetics, to aesthetics, to epistemology, to ontology, to movements like feminism, subalternism, to power and so on, translation universals etc., translation pedagogy, translation curriculum, translation syllabus etc., ethics, status, and future of the profession, translator-related issues: legal, copyright issues etc., squibs and discussion notes which are short pieces throwing up an interesting problem or analytical puzzle, reviews of translated texts, dictionaries and softwares, letters to the Editor.

### Submission:

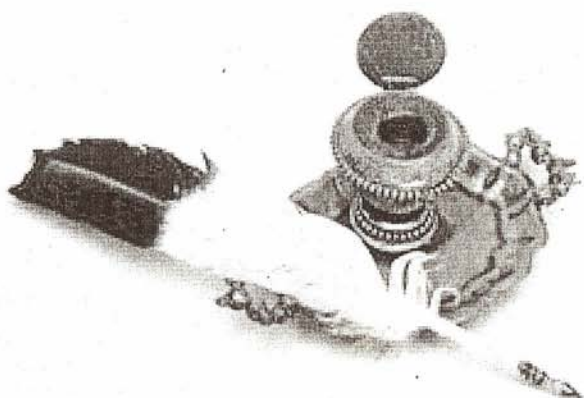
All submissions, contributions and queries should be addressed to:

**P. P. Giridhar PhD**  
**Central Institute of Indian languages,**  
**Hunsur road**  
**Manasagangotri,**  
**Mysore 570006.**



This journal is available in electronic version at  
[www.anukriti.net](http://www.anukriti.net)

# *TT* *Translation Today*



**Editors:**  
**Udaya Narayana Singh & P.P. Giridhar**

**Guest Editor:**  
**Anjali Gera Roy**

**Volume (1) Number (2) October 2004**

**Central Institute of Indian Languages**  
**Publication No. 534**

## **Editors**

**Udaya Narayana Singh & P.P. Giridhar**  
**Editorial Board**

**E.V.Ramakrishnan**  
University of Hyderabad, Hyderabad.

**M.Sridhar**  
University of Hyderabad, Hyderabad.

**Sukrita Paul Kumar**  
University Of Delhi, New Delhi.

**Vanamala Vishwanath**  
Bangalore University, Bangalore.

**Makarand Paranjpe**  
Centre of English and Linguistics,  
Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi.

**G.N. Devy**  
Director, Bhasha, Baroda Gujarat.

**Nirmal Kanti Bhattacharya**  
Editor, Indian Literature, New Delhi.

**V.C Harris**  
Mahatma Gandhi University, Kottayam

**O.L. Nagabhushanaswamy**  
Maharani's College, Bangalore.

**Maalan**  
Chennai

**Shubha Chakraborty-Dasgupta**  
Jadavpur University, Kolkata

**Meenakshi Mukherjee**  
Hyderabad.

**K. Sachidanandan**  
Sahitya Akademi, New Delhi

**Giridhar Rathi**  
Editor, Samakaleen, New Delhi.

**Alok Bhalla**  
C.I.E.F.L., Hyderabad.

**Editorial Assistants**

**Ms. Prapulla M. Mascarenhas & Ms. Deepa.G**



# **Translation Today**

VOLUME 1 NO II October 2004

Editors: Udaya Narayana Singh & P.P. Giridhar

Central Institute of Indian Languages, Mysore, 2004.

This material may not be reproduced or transmitted, either in part or in full, in any form or by any means, electronic, or mechanical, including photocopy, recording, or any information storage and retrieval system, without permission in writing from:

**Prof. Udaya Narayana Singh**

Director

Central Institute of Indian Languages

Manasagangotri, Mysore – 570 006, INDIA

Phone: 0091/ 0821–2515820 (Director)

Pabx: 0091/ 0821–2515558

Telex: 0846-268 CIIL IN

Grams: BHARATI

E-mail: udaya@ciil.stpmysoft.net (Director)

Fax: 0091/0821-2515032

bhasha@sancharnet.in

Website: <http://www.ciil.org>

To contact Head, Publications: **Dr. K. Ramasamy**

E-mail: ramasamyk@ciil.stpmysoft.net

ciil@sancharnet.in

ISSN-0971-8740

**Subscription: Rs. 100.00 (per issue); US \$ 20. 00 including postage (air-mail)**

Published by Prof. Udaya Narayana Singh, Director

Central Institute of Indian Languages, Mysore

Printed by Mr. S.B. Biswas, Manager

CIIL Printing Press, Manasagangotri, Mysore-570 006, India

Cover Design: H. Manohar

## GENERAL EDITORIAL

The Editorial Board is pleased to place in the readers' hands the **second issue** (print version) of the online journal, **Translation Today**. This has been long in coming for a variety of reasons which we will not go into here, the overwhelming reason however being that the journal is impelled by an urge to further writing on translation and of actual translation which are distinctly above the mediocre. Even while guarding against the possibility of such journals having a high mortality rate, one has to ensure vintage quality. Entry to the Hall of Quality has per force to be uncompromising. This issue focuses primarily on translation as it interfaces with postcolonialism. We know now that translation studies as a discipline has spread its tentacles far and wide, encompassing anything from human ontology to the machine although at the same time scholars have averred that the legitimacy of TS as an (autonomous) academic discipline is open to question. Primarily because TS has no theoretical questions of its own and even if it does, one takes recourse to other fields of enquiry for their answers. Although, despite protestations to the contrary, translation as a phenomenon is all the way the question of equivalence, language and Linguistics, the focus as Rajinder Singh (to appear) avers, has shifted to applying theories from literary and cultural studies to the sociopolitical aims and fate of possible objects of translation

and of its actual products. The received perception is that postcolonialism and translation are umbilically bonded, which is reflected in the guest-editor's remark below that 'translation is the essential premise of postcoloniality' "In its fascination with postmodernism", however, as Rajendra Singh (ibid) rightly points out, "TS seems to ignore the questions that could potentially constitute a site for its possible autonomy, atleast till some other science can absorb it or TT can establish itself as the ultimate unifying theory, an unlikely prospect" Yet we thought a debate on how translation interfaces with postcolonialism was worth a shot. This issue of TT is an outcome of such a debate. The general Editors take pleasure in thanking Anjali Gera Roy for taking pains to organise a seminar in Kharagpur on 'Translation and Postcolonialism' in IIT, Kharagpur whose peer-reviewed proceedings this issue carries.

## Reference

Rajendra Singh (to appear) Unsafe at Any Speed: Some Unfinished Reflections on the 'Cultural Turn' in Translation Studies. In Prafulla C.Kar and St Pierre (ed) **Translation: Reflections, Refractions, and Transformations**. Delhi: Pencraft International.

Udaya Narayana Singh & P.P. Giridhar



## GUEST EDITORIAL

### POSTCOLONIAL TRANSLATION

*Dr. Anjali Gera Roy is Professor in Dept. of Humanities & Social Sciences, Indian Institute of Technology, Kharagpur - 721302, West Bengal. She has published "Three Great African Novelists: Achebe, Soyinka, Tutuola" (2001 New Delhi: Creative), and several articles on Postcolonial literatures and theory. Her current interests are Culture and Media Studies, Folklore and Translation.*

*Post-colonialism, a neologism which has entered the literary jargon fairly recently, appears to have made up its mind to stay challenging its many detractors to find a suitable substitute to describe the global condition after the colonial encounter. Whether one chooses to display familiarity with the latest linguistic fads in metropolitan universities by opting for the word 'post-colonial', or plays conservative by preferring the good old 'commonwealth', one cannot deny the close kinship*

Translation is the essential premise of post-coloniality. Translation understood as a secondary activity, a derivative discourse dependent on an original text resonates with the dilemmas of post-coloniality. We are all 'translated' men or women irrespective of our disciplinary locations as we translate ideas, institutions, and ideologies originating in settings alien to our own, which doom us to unoriginality. As we discourse in borrowed languages, we are compelled to answer the question: Is there anything outside colonialism?

Definitely, there is. But the self that is outside colonialism lies hidden from the outsider's gaze in our languages to which we must return if we are to recover this self. Unfortunately, these indigenous languages of self-recovery are untranslatable into familiar euro-american categories. This brings us to the incommensurability thesis in Translation. Some of the essays shift the incommensurability thesis from *intralingual* to *interlingual* (=intersemiotic or multisemiotic translation).

The incommensurability premise is further compounded in the cultural terrain where cultural incommensurability is arranged in a hierarchical relation. T S Satyanath's definition of translation as "an act of transfer of knowledge, information and ideas from one language to another" as a colonial enterprise which implies "certain relationships of power among the languages and cultures involved in the process" fits all the essays in this issue including his own. Jharna Sanyal's *Vernacular Dressings and English Redressings*, Purabi Panwar's *Post-colonial Translation: Globalizing Literature* and Swati Ganguly's *Translation and Dissemination* implicate translation in relationships of power. Testifying to the "the importance of

translation in the project of the British Empire", Sanyal points out that "the politics of this metaphorical recasting" in the Preface to *Neel Darpan* lies in "elevating the local cultural markers to universal moral properties". While Sanyal and Panwar trace back the issue of power invested in the translator to the *orientalist* enterprise, Ganguly exposes the politics of translation in the disciplinary formation of post-colonial studies. Its privileged location in the Euro-American Academy enables the monitoring and control of what gets translated, disseminated or read, forcing one to repeat that "postcolonial nations like India also produce significant and powerful Indian regional languages or *bhasha* literatures".

Reading post-colonialism as 'resistance', Meena T Pillai says, "part of the project of postcolonial theory would be to push literary texts into this shifting arena of discursiveness, thus enabling new strands of counter narratives and counter contexts to shape themselves and complicate binarist histories". Reading translation as representation, she proceeds to analyze two subaltern narratives, one displaying "the need to implement discursive strategies to resist translation" and the other "indicating the translatability of the subaltern identity into the master language of the nation". Satyanath reveals "the processes of constructing dominations and counter constructions" by tracing the history of the Kannada translations of Shakespeare in which Shakespeare is reinscribed as Śēkh Pīr. Anjali Gera Roy, borrowing Rushdie's extension of the idea of translation or 'carrying across' to migrancy, cites another instance of post-colonial resistance, of a dislocated community's refusal to be translated into the national language by preserving pre-colonial dialectal difference through its deconstruction of the national language.



The essays by M K Raghavendra, Priyadarshi Patnaik and B Hariharan move into the relatively unexplored realm of intersemiotic translation. B Hariharan seeks to extend the meaning of translation beyond the linguistic to embrace the semiotic and the inchoate. 'A dream, or an orthodox tradition handed down from generation to generation', says he, 'is a text that may also be translated as well as the city'. Hariharan gives examples of translation as a personal enterprise, as a cultural enterprise and as a public enterprise. Raghavendra makes an insight-studded attempt to defend the much-maligned Hindi film against the plagiarism charge by presenting it as 'post-colonial appropriation'. Somadatta Mandal's paper elucidates the work of Tagore as a translator which, to quote her, is 'essentially colonial discourse'. Tutun Mukherjee's paper, the only one not on postcolonialism, is on cultural interference in translation.

**Anjali Gera Roy**  
Guest Editor

# CONTENTS

## Articles

1. 'PLAGIARIZING' FOR BOLLYWOOD  
M.K. RAGHAVENDRA 1
2. NOT SPEAKING A LANGUAGE THAT IS MINE  
ANJALI GERA ROY 26
3. HOW DOES SHAKESPEARE BECOME *ŚĒKH PĪR*  
IN KANNADA  
T.S. SATYANATH 44
4. TRANSLATION AS DISSEMINATION: A NOTE  
FROM AN ACADEMIC AND TRANSLATOR  
FROM BENGAL  
SWATI GANGULY 103
5. VERNACULAR DRESSING AND ENGLISH RE-  
DRESSINGS:  
TRANSLATING *NEEL DARPAN*  
JHARNA SANYAL 128
6. POST-COLONIAL TRANSLATION: GLOBALIZING  
LITERATURE?  
PURABI PANWAR 145
7. TRANSLATING THE NATION, TRANSLATING THE  
SUBALTERN  
MEENA T. PILLAI 160
8. TRANSLATION, TRANSMUTATION,  
TRANSFORMATION: A SHORT  
REFLECTION ON THE INDIAN KALA TRADITION  
PRIYADARSHI PATNAIK 178

<b>9. TRANSLATION: A CULTURAL SLIDE SHOW</b>	
B. HARIHARAN	192
<b>10. THE HIDDEN RHYTHMS AND TENSIONS OF THE SUBTEXT: THE PROBLEMS OF CULTURAL TRANSFERENCE IN TRANSLATION</b>	
TUTUN MUKHERJEE	211
<b>11. OF DEFINING AND REDEFINING AN 'IDEAL' TRANSLATOR: PROBLEMS AND POSSIBILITIES</b>	
SOMDATTA MANDAL	230

### **Translation Reviews**

<b>1. BURNING GROUND: SINGED SOULS</b>	
A.G. KHAN	253
<b>2. TRANSLATION: WHERE ANGELS FEAR TO TREAD</b>	
A.G. KHAN	256
<b>3. TRANSLATION OF "PACHOLA" [MARATHI] INTO "FALL" [ENGLISH]</b>	
MADHAVI APTE	259



# 'PLAGIARIZING' FOR BOLLYWOOD

M. K. RAGHAVENDRA

***Abstract:** Indian popular cinema was held to be imitative of Hollywood until fairly recently when its methods became the subject of deeper scrutiny. Bombay filmmakers repeatedly stress that their films aim to differ in content and format from Western films and there is a definite method involved in making films for Indian audiences. Most people are aware that Hollywood or Western cinema frequently provides Bollywood with its models but no successful Bombay film simply 'copies' Hollywood. Most films, even when they 'borrow' from non-Indian models, need to integrate the borrowed motifs within Indian filmmaking conventions if the film is to be successful. Film makers assert that the basis of 'Indianization' lies in the following: (1) The way the story line is developed (2) The crucial necessity of emotion because Western films are regarded as 'cold' (3) The blending of 'attractions' like songs, dances, fights, comedy interludes within the narrative. Once it is apparent that Hollywood and Bollywood do not subscribe to the same kind of narration, the process of 'plagiarization' itself becomes an interesting subject for study. The easiest way of undertaking the study is to look at the narrative principles regarded as sacrosanct by Hollywood, principles that are rigorously codified, and compare*

*them to what Bollywood chooses to do. The difficulty is perhaps that Bollywood has never attempted a codification of its narrative principles but, with some effort, the critic can discover some of them and then undertake the exercise. The paper looks at how Indian popular cinema responds under a single parameter regarded as crucial by Hollywood - the principle of causality that the narrative must respect in as much as the narrative should be tightly constructed as a chain of causes and effects. A scrutiny of Indian popular cinema shows this to be an area where it could be regarded as 'deficient' and the paper attempts to grapple with the philosophical issues underlying Indian popular cinema's 'episodic' structure. Since it is necessary to look at an example where the copy does not simply 'borrow' one or two motifs from the original but follows it fairly closely, the paper also makes a comparison between Josef Von Sternberg's *The Blue Angel* (1931), with V Shantaram's *Pinjra* (1972), an admittedly ingenious remake of the former.*

Popular Indian cinema was held to be imitative of Hollywood until fairly recently when its method became the subject of deeper scrutiny. Bombay filmmakers emphasize that their films differ in content and format from Western films and that there is a definite method involved in making films for Indian audiences. Most people are aware that Hollywood or Western cinema in general frequently provides Bollywood with its models, but no successful Bombay film, it must be stressed here, simply 'copies' Hollywood. Most films, even when they 'borrow' from non-Indian models, need to integrate the borrowed motifs within Indian filmmaking conventions if the film must be successful. Filmmakers assert that the basis of 'indianization' lies in the following:

1. The way the story line is developed
2. The crucial necessity of emotion because Western films are regarded as 'cold'
3. The blending of 'attractions' like songs, dances, fights, comic interludes within the narrative. (*Thomas 1982: 26(3-4)*)

Once it is apparent that Hollywood and Bollywood do not subscribe to the same kind of narration, the process of 'plagiarization' itself becomes an interesting subject for study. The easiest way of undertaking the study is to look at the narrative principles regarded as sacro-sanct by classical cinema from Hollywood, principles which are rigorously codified, and then to compare them with what Bollywood chooses to do. The difficulty is perhaps that Bollywood has never attempted a codification of its narrative principles but, with some effort, the critic can discover some of them and then undertake the exercise. The difficulty with defining Bollywood in relation to Hollywood is that it reduces the former to the status of the 'other'. This approach treats Hollywood as an absolute and it will find detractors but its purpose is akin to defining a location in relation to a dominant external landmark. It has also been asserted that no clear-cut alternative to Hollywood exists and that to get beyond it, one must first go through it<sup>1</sup>. This paper goes some distance towards refuting this contention.

The paper looks at how Indian popular cinema responds under a single parameter regarded as crucial by classical Hollywood cinema - that the narrative must respect the principle of causality as much as the narrative should be tightly constructed as a chain of causes and effects. A scrutiny of Indian popular cinema shows this to be an area where it could be regarded as 'deficient' and the paper attempts to

grapple with the philosophical issues underlying Indian popular cinema's 'episodic' structure, that is, its tendency to 'frustrate the narrativitous urge for causal connection.' (Scholes *et al* (ed) 1985)

## Causality and Psychological Motivation

The most important system defining classical cinema is psychological causation. We can now inquire into Indian popular cinema's behaviour under this parameter in the expectation that the inquiry will lead us into the logic of its methods:

*The classical Hollywood film presents psychologically defined individuals who struggle to solve a clear-cut problem or attain specific goals. In the course of this struggle, the characters enter into conflict with other or with external circumstances. The story ends with a decisive victory or a defeat, a resolution of the problem and clear achievement or non-achievement of the goals. The principal causal agency is thus the character, a discriminated individual endowed with a consistent batch of evident traits, qualities and behaviours.* (Bordwell 1985)

In its early years Hollywood relied more on coincidences, which had been the staple of melodrama and popular 19<sup>th</sup> century theatre. But with the growing emphasis on realism around the turn of the century, coincidences became less acceptable. The elimination of coincidences became necessary through a careful preparation of events throughout the plot. The role of coincidences - especially to resolve plots -



was not considered desirable. Psychological causation is not only a possible option and causality can also be conceived as social - as initiated by group processes - in the manner of Soviet cinema of the 1920s. One can equally conceive of an impersonal causation in which chance and coincidences leave little room for personal action and this is largely the method of postwar European cinema. Hollywood, of course, also permits impersonal causes, but they are usually subordinated to psychological causation. Impersonal causes may initiate or alter a line of story action but personal causes must then take over and move the narrative. To illustrate, a war may separate lovers but they must react to their situation. Coincidences and accidents must confine themselves entirely to the initial condition (*Bordwell et al 1960*). In the structure of the classical film, causes are also left dangling to be picked-up subsequently by effects. This method leads the spectator to anticipation and guarantees that the action does not slacken between any two scenes (*ibid*).

Mehboob Khan's *Andaz* has been studied by film academics and is often cited as a film following some of Hollywood's methods (*e.g. Vasudevan 2000*). Examining its narrative method is useful in the present context. Before we examine the manner in which *Andaz* structures its narrative, we should perhaps understand the implications of 'psychological causation' through an appropriate illustration. I have chosen a simple illustration - Sam Raimi's *Spiderman* (2002) - and am examining only part of the narrative. The chosen part of *Spiderman* can be broken down chronologically as under:

1. Peter Parker is a timid young man in love with Mary Jane whose boyfriends are hunks. Peter knows that -



given his puny stature (and his gig-lamps, the glasses) - he cannot win Mary Jane.

2. Peter nonetheless pursues Mary Jane discreetly but, during a visit to a museum, he is stung by a genetically altered super spider and becomes 'spider-strong'. He discovers his new strength, unwittingly thrashes the school bully and finally gets Mary Jane's attention.
3. Peter becomes more confident in his newly discovered strength and is also drawn closer to Mary Jane because of his achievement with the bully. But his rival owns an automobile and Mary Jane continues to date him. Peter now believes he can win Mary Jane only by first possessing a car.
4. Peter looks through a newspaper for information about used cars but discovers a notice about a wrestling match where he can win the required money (\$500). He needs to find a colourful costume, and given his newly discovered propensities, dresses up as a 'Human Spider'.
5. His beloved uncle senses the change he is undergoing. On the way to the wrestling match he warns him against misusing his gifts.
6. Peter Parker enters the ring where the manager announces him as 'Spiderman'. Peter uses his spider strength and demolishes his opponent, but the manager cheats him of the prize money.
7. An armed man robs the manager, but Peter deliberately doesn't intervene.
8. The armed robber also kills Peter's uncle in the street while making his getaway.
9. Peter pursues the robber and helps make the arrest, but he also understands that his letting the culprit get away

initially caused his uncle's death. He recognizes his error and resolves to fight crime as 'Spiderman'.

This is a sketchy account of only a part of the film and several details have been omitted, but it provides a fair idea of its approach to narration. If each of the above is considered an 'episode', the film employs a specific way to link the episodes together - in the manner of a causal chain. Peter Parker becomes super-strong by accident but his psychological condition induces him to *take advantage of the accident* and each episode is connected to the succeeding one in a similar way. To illustrate further, Peter needs a car to win Mary Jane, but he doesn't have the money. He finds an easy source but still needs to wrestle to get it. He wins the bout because of his 'spider-strength' but the manager cheats him. Peter encounters the robber just after he has been cheated but allows him to get away because he is upset with the manager. The robber kills Peter's uncle because Peter allows him to get away. Peter Parker resolves to fight crime because of his own part in his uncle's death.

The narrative may abound in accidents, but the accidents don't happen arbitrarily. The narrative moves because the accidents happen at the ripe moment, taking advantage of existing circumstances and the relationship may (for want of a better term) be termed '*dialectical*' in as much as each interaction leads to a new stage in the narrative. This means that every event is important and no episode can be removed from the chain without affecting the entire story. Plot and character 'develop' as part of a continuing process.

Returning to *Andaz*, the major episodes in the film can be arranged chronologically as under:

1. The motherless Neena is brought up and 'spoiled' by her widowed father.
2. Neena meets Dilip when he saves her in a riding accident.
3. Neena invites Dilip home. Dilip loves her and fondly imagines that she reciprocates his feelings.
4. Neena's father dies suddenly and she names Dilip impulsively to manage her business empire. He takes this as a sign that she cares for him.
5. Rajan arrives and Dilip suddenly discovers that Neena loves Rajan.
6. Dilip retreats from Neena's side and she duly marries Rajan.
7. Dilip's behaviour becomes morose and difficult for Neena to understand. When she presses him for the reasons, he expresses his love for her and she is shocked.
8. Neena and Rajan have a daughter.
9. Dilip comes to their daughter's birthday party and startles Neena, but he lets her know secretly that he has decided to leave her alone. Rajan sees them together, misunderstands their relationship and grows jealous.
10. Rajan's jealousy becomes more and more acute. It grows so intense that he assaults Dilip, causing him to become mentally imbalanced.
11. Dilip is so deranged that he gets violent and expresses an intense urge to kill Rajan.
12. Neena is forced to shoot Dilip dead when he becomes too threatening.
13. Neena is tried and sentenced to life imprisonment after Rajan speaks out against her in court.

14. Rajan discovers a letter written by Dilip that exonerates Neena and he regrets his own actions.
15. Rajan, Neena and the child have one last meeting before she is led away into prison.

I have omitted one or two subplots and comic interludes in my telling of the story in order to make it simpler. Although the events in the film follow a chronological order, the film contains little evidence of the characteristic linking that distinguishes *Spiderman* and *Andaz* is distinctly 'episodic'. Rather than each episode being linked to the preceding one - as effect to cause - the narrative tends to refer back to a first cause, which is Neena's free upbringing. In fact, one could even say that the story actually emerges from this first cause. Neena's character does not change appreciably thereafter although she 'regrets' her error and wishes that her own daughter be brought up correctly. Dilip remains his grave and vulnerable self until the blow on his head upsets his balance. Rajan's display of jealousy is abrupt and disappears quickly when he discovers Dilip's letter.

One can also aver that *Andaz* arranges it so that each character is defined in terms of an 'essential' trait rather than through attributes that are allowed to develop. Where 'character' is usually defined in terms of intentional action (*Bordwell et al (ed) 1996:149-50*); we find few events in the narrative in which Dilip, Rajan or Neena act intentionally towards foreseeable ends. It might be more accurate to say that they allow unintentional acts or even 'destiny' to dictate to them. Since *Andaz* defines character in terms of what is innate and individuals do not act intentionally, the action necessarily takes the shape of fortuitous events (or impulses) whose consequences are experienced and felt.



What has been noticed pertains not only to *Andaz* and is also evidenced in the fortuitous ends arranged for hate-figures. We can say, generally, that individual acts are presented as 'fulfilled happenings' rather than as executions of 'intent'. If we are to understand the structure of popular film narrative as a 'grammar', we can justifiably say that its construction is the visual equivalent of the 'passive voice'. It chooses not to generate excitement through a consistent use of the 'active voice', as Hollywood prefers to. It can perhaps also be said that 'free will' and 'determinism' have some kind of correspondence with the grammatical employment of the active and the passive voice respectively.

### **The meaning and its 'relay'**

To put it briefly, there is a tendency in *Andaz* to identify each character with an 'essence' and it is this tendency in popular cinema that is usually treated with derision by critics who valorize the efforts at realism in Indian cinema:

*...In these films abstract notions have simple human representations. Good is characteristically a young man, necessarily handsome and exceptionally virile; Good's offshoot, Vulnerable Innocence, is naturally a young woman, necessarily beautiful, preferably lacking in intelligence, and helpless; Evil is usually male, also virile and necessarily ugly and sometimes female and, if at all glamorous, then necessarily witch-like; Evil's offshoot, Confusion, can be male or female and preferably ugly and also untrustworthy. (Hood 2000:3)*



The remark is rudely dismissive, but it nevertheless contains a kernel of truth in as much as it recognizes that 'character' does not develop in popular cinema, but is perceived as being present in the form of an 'essence'. This supports an observation also made by Ashis Nandy about essential characteristics:

*If the story line chooses to depict the hero as an apparent mixture of good and evil he must be shown to be essentially good, whose badness is thereby reduced to a temporary aberration. (Nandy 1980:90)*

The issue here is not the philosophical validity of this viewpoint, but how the viewpoint shows up consistently in cinema. What Indian popular cinema's more uncharitable critics don't contend with is that the classical arts in India (which they are less inclined to attack) are founded on the same perceptions and this is substantiated by Indian art critics who distinguish between traditional Indian and western art in the following way:

*... let us take ... the well-known portrait 'Christ before The Pilate'. We find here the judge sitting upon his high seat of honour, and before him the Jewish priests are making angry...complaints about Jesus. In front of Jesus, on a high pillar, there is a large statue of Caesar; at some distance from it, in a dark corner, Jesus is standing ... surrounded by Roman soldiers. Rembrandt ...chose for his portrayal the moment when at the end of his strivings in the cause of the religion he regarded to*

*be true, he was discarded by his own people and brought before a Roman judge. The choice of this particular moment, though revealing the great artistic insight of Rembrandt, fails to put Jesus in proper perspective ...Indian artists (on the other hand) ...did not lay emphasis on any passing (moment) ...But tried to discover (the essence of) ...the object of creation. This was perceived by them as dominating over individual moments ... and could be regarded as characterizing the soul or essence of the artist's object of creation. (S.N. Dasgupta 1954:37)*

The moment chosen by Rembrandt apparently corresponds to what Barthes (in writing about the tableau) described as a 'pregnant moment' (*Barthes 1977:70-71*). The moment can be likened to what Barthes described as a tableau because it is suspended between Jesus Christ's life and his martyrdom, both of which surround the moment and are eliminated from the picture. The pregnant moment is poised between the past and the present and is frozen within a continuum of change, a continuum that can be likened to a perpetual resolution of binary conflicts.

The example cited pertains to narrative and narrative constructions, but the fundamental perception has wider connotations. The following quotation is from a western sculptor who sees the 'pregnant moment' (here the equilibrium between two opposing forces) as the key moment to be captured in any artistic representation:

*Two sculptors are carving a sphere out of stone.  
One of them wants to achieve the most perfect form*

*of the sphere and sees the meaning of his work in turning a mass of stone into a perfect sphere. The other is also carving a sphere, but only to convey the inner tension expressed in the form of a sphere filled to bursting point. The first will be the work of a craftsman and the second, that of an artist.* (Berger 1969:109)

The 'episodic' quality of *Andaz* means that it does not answer favorably to the Aristotelian concept of 'unity of action'. Unity of action requires that the incidents in the story should cluster around a central animating idea. A single purpose must be seen to run throughout the series of incidents, which must be so woven together that it should become evident that one incident could not have taken place without the other (Hermequin 1897:89). The central animating idea has come to represent the 'theme' in classical cinema and the theme is made to emerge only through the causation in the narrative. The factors just discussed suggest why it is difficult to identify themes in Indian popular cinema and why theme music is noticeably absent from most of it.

It is difficult to identify themes in Indian popular cinema. What each film has to say nevertheless emerges unequivocally and this apparently needs further explanation. Madhava Prasad draws some broad conclusions that are pertinent at this point and put very briefly, he contrasts the 'relay of meaning' in Indian popular cinema with the 'production of meaning' in classical Hollywood cinema (Prasad 1998:50-51).

I earlier remarked that the first cause in *Andaz* is Neena's free upbringing, which is suggested in the very first

scene of the film, and the ubiquitous 'first cause' in any film is perhaps the site of location of the transmittable meaning (Bordwell 1985:157) <sup>2</sup>. The episodes subsequently arranged only assist in transmitting the meaning and they do not 'produce' it in the manner of the classical film. Interestingly, the plot material in a classical Sanskrit play has also been seen to be present as a seed or a germ at the beginning and to grow as the action progresses (Byrski 1993:144) <sup>3</sup>, and the first cause may correspond to this seed or germ. Since the text of a popular film is only a way of transmitting meaning to an audience, it needs a transparent language that enables it to effect the abstract signification through concrete images. Chidananda Das Gupta (1991) has this to say about how film convention supplants the 'real' in popular cinema:

*There are a number of ways in which the popular film struggles to overcome the built-in naturalism of cinema, and to bend this medium, developed in a western technological society, towards its own, mythical style of discourse ...A beard on Valmiki in the Ramayana - whether on film or on TV - is not a photographic record of a real beard on a real man; it is a photograph, but of the beard symbol of someone who is supposed, by tacit agreement between the filmmaker and the audience, to be a traditional sage. (Chidananda Dasgupta 1991:54)*

The 'tacit agreement' between the filmmaker and the spectator on the meaning of each representation implies that the shape of the represented object must be fixed. The object must also be conceived and represented in a manner that makes all its attributes visible at first glance and not gradually revealed<sup>4</sup>. The specificity of the image must be employed to



make an abstract signification and whatever Das Gupta notices are the ways by which this specificity is undermined and the individual made to correspond to the type.

The titles of individual films also support the hypothesis that the text only transmits a pre-existing abstract meaning because they are abstract or symbolic words or phrases like *kismet* ('Fate'), *dhool ka phool* ('Flower in the dust'), *sangam* ('Confluence'), *dil ek mandir* ('The heart is a shrine') and *sholay* ('Flames'). Their relation with the text is metaphoric and only rarely metonymic. (Prasad 1998:48).

The rules of *Natyashastra* also enunciate the purpose for which drama can be employed and Hindi popular films apparently follow an ancient precedent:

*...they have deep-rooted foundations in certain traditional rules according to which drama should be a diversion for people weighed down by sorrow or fatigue or grief or ill luck; it should be a rest (for the body and the mind) - Natyashastra 113-114.* (Shekar 1977:126)

This purpose seems to explain the deliberate 'escapism' of much of Indian popular cinema because escapism is, by definition, a denial of the 'real'. Still, the explanation also finds apparent contradictions in other texts of classical Indian theory because Indian poetics does not actually treat literature as an 'autonomous' category divorced from the 'real' but actually 'truer':

*Art is a kind of mimesis according to the rasa theory; but it is an imitation of a very special kind,*



*for rasa does not imitate things and actions in their particularity, in their actuality, but rather in their universality, their potentiality - and this 'imitation' is said to be more real than any particular real thing. (Deutsch 1993:127)*

Whatever has been said so far about Indian popular cinema suggests that it supports an aesthetic viewpoint that corresponds to an extreme form of 'essentialism'<sup>5</sup>. The observation that it does not perceive narrative as development through conflict has already been elaborated upon.

We have already seen something of the character 'stereotypes' deriving from the fixed denotative purpose of the narrative. Sanskrit drama permitted only a limited number of character-types for heroes and heroines and the same observation can perhaps also be made for Indian popular cinema although the precise number cannot be fixed in the latter case (Shekar 1977)<sup>6</sup>. Further, it is not only heroes and heroines who are conceived as types. As an illustration, V Shantaram's *Do Ankhen Barah Haath* (1957) is about an idealistic jailer who sets up a farming commune with six convicted murderers. The director employs the conventions of popular cinema to represent his six characters as 'convicts' and we therefore see all six men represented in equivalent fashion, as unkempt, bearded and menacing. The same observation can be made of courtesans and widows. Popular cinema keeps widows and courtesans out of wedlock, but not because this possibility does not get social approval but because, having conceived of them *in essence* as widows and courtesans, it is loath to see them change. As we shall eventually see, the occasional film that breaks the convention is not more 'radical' but only one that finds a way out of a representational

difficulty. The representational difficulty can be located in the identification of truths with 'essences' and the consequent disinclination to reconcile contradictions (*Nandy 1980:89*)<sup>7</sup>.

Critics of popular Indian cinema may wonder if the tendencies described bear this kind of overt intellectualization; they would ask if the 'stereotypes' cannot be simply put down to inept characterization. It must be remarked here that American films are also prone to using stereotypes, but that these stereotypes are differently conceived. To illustrate, a frequently occurring stereotype is the housewife and/or mother becoming radicalized in her dealings with the male establishment - *Norma Rae* (1979), *Erin Brockovich* (2000). Contrary to the model made familiar by Indian cinema, it is not the character that is stereotyped in Hollywood. What is stereotypical is the way he or she is allowed to develop and a familiar ploy is for a character, not a perfect specimen, to improve in the course of the narrative (*Bordwell 2000*)<sup>8</sup>.

When films have narratives spread over prolonged (although indefinite) intervals, change must somehow be accommodated, but the popular film responds by asserting that the initial condition is inviolable. In films like Vijay Bhatt's *Baiju Bawra* (1952) and M.S Anand's *Agneepath* (1990) a child grows up to right an injustice done to his father. The child's attitude, arrested in implacability, is then carried forward completely into adulthood to furnish the narrative with its *raison d'être*. When the boy grows up, the rest of the world has altered but little. The villain is not only sustained in an unsullied condition for the exclusive purpose of his vengeance, but the hero must also die after his ends are achieved because vengefulness defines him entirely. This is vastly different from the realism of Coppola's *The Godfather*, in which the

protagonist revenges himself impassively upon his father's murderer who is now senile and beyond recollecting his victim from twenty years before. In *Agneepath*, vengefulness is the hero's essential condition and he may not depart from it.

About Sanskrit drama, we learn that

*"Sanskrit drama aims at imitating the state or condition while Greek drama imitates the action."*  
(Shekar1977: 111).

'Imitating the state or condition' assumes a 'state or condition' as a general notion that the specificity of the actual experience cannot undo. The 'state or condition' in Sanskrit theatre has perhaps some correspondence with the pre-existing 'meaning' in the Hindi film, the message that the text, the production and the performances are specifically designed to relay to the spectator.

### **An Illustration**

I will conclude this paper with an illustration of the ingenious way in which an Indian film plagiarizes from a western text. Joseph Von Sternberg's *The Blue Angel* is a masterpiece of German psychological realism and tells the story of an authoritarian schoolteacher, who falls in love with a nightclub dancer and leaves his vocation to follow and marry her. Professor Rath is a misfit in the troupe, but he gets by doing small jobs. The narrative reaches its climax when the players return to the Professor's hometown where he is expected to perform as a clown in front of the same students he once dominated and be publicly humiliated. The Professor is dressed up to perform as a clown, but he goes completely



insane and attempts to kill the Master of Ceremonies. Professor Rath dies of a heart attack the next morning when he steals into the school and returns to the reassurance of his beloved school desk, where he once exercised authority.

The *Blue Angel* is about a distinguished man's moral decline and his humiliation and in *Pinjra* (1973) V Shantaram adapts it in a revealing way. In Shantaram's film the *guruji*, the teacher, is a revered figure in the village. He is aghast at the way the *tamasha* performances are corrupting the local populace. He earns the antagonism of the dancer-heroine when he tries to evict her troupe, but he gradually begins to desire her. Shantaram now introduces another local reprobate who hates the *guruji* but who is murdered one night outside the latter's room by the husband of a woman he once molested (when the *guruji* is sitting inside with the dancer). The dancer cannot give evidence exonerating the *guruji* in the murder because this would implicate him differently. The two dress the dead man in the *guruji*'s clothes, and with the face of the corpse being disfigured, people believe that it is the *guruji* who is dead. But the *guruji* has inadvertently left his fingerprints upon the murder weapon and this will have eventual repercussions.

The *guruji* now goes off with the dancers, descending further and further morally (tobacco, liquor and lust) even while his statue is worshipped in his native village. The *guruji* nevertheless respects the dancer's chastity and not only refuses to touch her, but also gets into inconvenient fights with her clients. When he is finally required to perform and sing on the stage he actually *rises* to the occasion through a noble declaration of how low he has sunk and abruptly regains his original dignity. The dancer realizes her errors and understands

his goodness, but he is abruptly arrested for his own murder. The people of his native village do not recognize him because he has changed in appearance and they insult and humiliate him. But the *guruji* bears their jibes with fortitude because of his commitment to what he once represented. The dancer dies of shock and grief when the death sentence is pronounced after his admission of 'guilt' and he goes to the scaffold courageously after a last gesture of tenderness towards her.

Instead of portraying, as *The Blue Angel* does, a staunch individual's inexorable decline and fall, *Pinjra* eventually affirms its protagonist's innate qualities. The changes undergone by the *guruji* are temporary aberrations induced by corrupt influences and he finally returns to his 'essential' moral condition when he embraces death. The heroine is allowed to change but her initial condition can be understood as mere 'naughtiness' induced by her profession and she also regains her 'true' moral stature in the end. Bollywood has often been accused of being 'unoriginal' but the example of *Pinjra* demonstrates how 'borrowings' must be integrated within Indian filmmaking conventions.

## Notes

1. The 'centrality' of Hollywood is often asserted. (*Bordwell et al.1985*).
2. Hollywood screenplay writing manuals have long insisted on a formula and the archetypal plot consisting of an undisturbed stage, a disturbance, a struggle for the elimination of the disturbance and its actual elimination. The disturbance in classical cinema may



correspond to what I termed the 'first cause' in Indian popular cinema. The difference is that the fact of the initial disturbance is not important enough to be recalled subsequently in classical Hollywood film narrative, but the first cause is invoked time and again in Indian popular cinema. Neena's upbringing is brought up repeatedly in *Andaz* and the hero of *Deewar* (1975) frequently recalls the tattoo upon his forearm representing his humiliation as a child. This also supports my understanding that the meaning or the message to be relayed resides in this 'first cause'.

3. It is apparent that the 'disturbance' in classical film narrative is quite different from the 'seed' that grows into the plot material in popular Indian cinema although it occupies approximately the same position in the unfolding film.
4. This finds an echo in the way characters are represented in Sanskrit theatre. Here, for instance, is a description of how Vasavadatta, the heroine of Bhasa's play *The Vision of Vasavadatta* was conceived in a present day production. The heroine's emotions do not 'develop' through the dramatic action. They are so essentially a part of her that they are actually encoded in her costume: "*Vasavadatta is the cause of the arousal ...of romantic love. During the physical separation from her husband, she emotionally comes closer to him. While she is the heroine separated from her lover... she becomes completely assured of her husband's love ... in spite of his second marriage during the play. Her colours in the production were*

*gray and purplish magenta which expresses her love in separation.*"(Gandhi 1993).

5. This is how essentialism in its extreme form has been defined: "Reifying to an immutable nature or type." Terry Eagleton (*Eagleton 1966:103*).
6. The qualities of the hero were based on the following models: princes, *brahmanas*, ministers, merchants and army generals. The hero was essentially noble but he could be exalted, calm, haughty or boisterous. Heroines could be experienced, inexperienced or bold, the hero could be her first or a later love and she could be placed in eight different situations with the hero. Depending on her birth (high, middle, low) her relationship with the hero could correspond to one of 384 different types. The comic relief was provided by the *vidhushaka*, a jester or fool, who was ugly, uncouth, usually had protruding teeth and was a glutton.
7. Nandy notices the same characteristics, but sees them simply as a tendency to avoid 'shades of gray' in its portrayals. Nandy likens Hindi cinema to spectacle and compares it to all-in wrestling, citing Roland Barthes' celebrated essay (Barthes 1985:15-25). My own reading is obviously different.
8. David Bordwell (Bordwell 2000) also cites the personality faults routinely overcome by the protagonists in various films - shyness (*While You Were Sleeping*), manipulativeness (*Tootsie*), lack of confidence (*Back to the Future*), arrogance (*Groundhog Day*) and overconfidence (*Speed*).

## References

- Barthes, Roland (1977). **Image, Music, Text.** Trans. Stephen Heath. London: Fontana.
- Barthes, Roland (1985). "*The World of Wrestling*" in **Mythologies.** London: Paladin.
- Berger, John (1969). **Art and Revolution: Ernst Neizvestny and the Role of the Artist in the USSR.** Harmondsworth: Penguin.
- Bordwell, David; Staiger, Janet & Thompson, Kristin (1985) **The Classical Hollywood Cinema: Film Style and Mode of Production upto 1960.** London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.
- Bordwell, David (1985). **Narration in the Fiction Film.** London: Methuen.
- Bordwell, David (2000). **Planet Hongkong: Popular Cinema and the Art of Entertainment.** Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Byrski, M Christopher (1993). "*Sanskrit Drama as an Aggregate of Model Situations*" in Baumer, Rachel Van M. and Brandon, James R (ed) **Sanskrit Drama in Performance.** New Delhi: Motilal Banarsidas.
- Dasgupta S.N (1954). **Fundamentals of Indian Art.** New Delhi: Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan.

- Deutsch, Eliot (1993). "*Reflections on Some Aspects of the Theory of Rasa*" in Rachel Van M. Baumer and James R. Brandon (ed) **Sanskrit Drama in Performance**. New Delhi: Motilal Banarsidas.
- Eagleton, Terry (1966). **The Illusions of Post-modernism**. London: Blackwell Publishers.
- Gandhi, Shanthi (1993) "*A Sanskrit Play in Performance*" in Baumer, Rachel Van M. and Brandon James R (ed) **Sanskrit Drama in Performance**. New Delhi: Motilal Banarasidas.
- Gupta, Chidananda Das (1991). **The Painted Face**. New Delhi: Roli Books.
- Hermequin, Alfred (1897). **The Art of Playwriting**. Boston: Mifflin Co.
- Hood, John W. (2000) **The Essential Mystery: Major Filmmakers of Indian Art Cinema**. New Delhi: Orient Longman.
- Livingstone, Paisley (1996). '*Characterization and Fictional Truth*' in Bordwell, David & Carroll, Noel (ed) **Post Theory: Reconstructing Film Studies**. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.
- Mast, Gerald & Cohen, Marshall (ed) (1985). **Film Theory and Criticism: Introductory Readings**. New York: Oxford University Press.



Nandy, Ashis (1980). **The Popular Hindi Film: Ideology and First Principles**. India International Center Quarterly, Special Issue. March.

Prasad M. Madhava (1998). **Ideology of the Hindi Film: A Historical Construction**. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, N16.

Scholes, Robert (1985). "*Narration and Narrativity in Film*", in Gerald Mast, Marshall Cohen (ed) **Film Theory and Criticism: Introductory Readings**. New York: Oxford University Press.

Shekar, Indu (1977). **Sanskrit Drama: Its Origins and Decline**. Delhi: Munshi Ram Manoharlal.

Thomas, Rosie (1982). **Indian Cinema: Pleasures and Popularity**. *Screen*.

Vasudevan, Ravi (ed) (2000). **Making Meaning in Indian Cinema**. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.

# NOT SPEAKING A LANGUAGE THAT IS MINE

ANJALI GERA ROY

*Abstract:* This paper aims to highlight the appropriation of languages by Islamic, Hindu and Sikh nationalisms before, during and after the Partition of the subcontinent in 1947 that signalled the end of the shared Punjabi ethnolinguistic memory by focusing on the displaced Hindu Punjabi experience. The fashioning of the Indian citizen subject through the national language causes a schizophrenic split in the Hindu Punjabi subject, with its ethnicity in conflict with language. The displaced Hindu Punjabi subject converts its multiple displacements from homeland, culture and language to construct itself in the new land through a hybrid language, which is neither Hindi nor Punjabi that adequately articulates its split location.

I speak a language that is not mine.<sup>1</sup> I don't speak a language that is mine. My mother tongue is Punjabi. But I don't speak it. To be more precise, I am not as fluent in it as I am in Hindi, the national language, in colonial English, or even in the local Bengali. But ever since I can remember, I have

entered 'Punjabi' in the column where one has to enter a mother tongue. I am not alone in making this contradictory claim, for I discover it to be a disability I share with other 'displaced' Hindu Punjabis of my generation.<sup>2</sup> How can one stake a claim to a mother tongue one speaks haltingly, softening its heavy consonants and lengthening its vowels? How can one demand the membership of a linguistic group without speaking its language? This paradoxical disengagement of language from ethnicity occurs at the 'displaced' sites of the Indian nation place. It foregrounds the language/ethnicity elision in the pre-national Indian imaginary superscripted by print nationalism. I will trace the linguistic dislocations of Partition displacement to examine the problematic constitution of the Indian subject converging on a national language.

The 'Indian nation' myth essentially aimed to overwrite, in a unifying national script, linguistic-cultural identifications. The middle-aged nation's failure at national language implementation speaks volumes about the tribal mothers' recalcitrance to learn the new patois. The strong resistance to Hindi language implementation, in the South as well as in non-Hindi speaking states, is rooted in the elision of language and ethnicity in the *Bharavarshiya* imaginary<sup>3</sup>. The national language comes metonymically burdened with the homogeneity of the nation narrative in this interlocking of language with ethnicity. National language implementation is shot with a strong ambivalence that mirrors the Indian subject's problematic constitution. The 'one as many' slogan of the Indian nation, voiced in the national language, is greeted with a loud wail in the vernacular tongues, which apprehend the nation's unifying impulse as eroding their regional difference.

The stubborn attachment to the mother tongue is a vociferous protest against the feared dissolution of the many into one. The transnational era has signaled the return of the 'tribes' following the tracks of these tribal tongues buried under the national unconscious. What happened to the dialects that died with the last survivors? To which tribal songs may their descendants turn to claim tribal ancestry? Will the permanent loss of these dialects drum the birth of new idiolects? I shall attempt to explore these issues by tracing the linguistic habits of three generations of a displaced Hindu Punjabi family, which resettled in Lucknow, the capital of Uttar Pradesh in the Hindi heartland.<sup>4</sup>

My analysis, grounded in a family narrative, is restricted to the experience of a micro community of displaced Hindu Punjabis dispersed after United Punjab's partition in 1947 to different parts of India. My arguments are based on my routine interactions and conversations with members of similar displaced Hindu Punjabi families in the Indian cities and towns I have moved from 1964 to 2003, covering Srinagar, Jammu, Jaipur, Lucknow, Delhi, Nainital, Chennai, Bombay, Kolkata and Bangalore. 'Stories' have acquired legitimacy as an alternative research methodology in the humanities and social sciences in the recent years. I follow an intuitive method drawing from my readings in post-colonial theory, subaltern, diaspora and culture studies. I have grounded my explorations in a self-narrative in the hope that it will be corroborated by the narratives of other displaced Hindu Punjabi families. I believe that such 'storytelling' can be substantiated and supplemented by empirical sociological methodologies. In my opinion, self-narratives like the ones used in this text could fill up the gaps that sociologizing and anthropologizing have not been able to account for. They can



provide a close-up focus that zeroes in on the minutiae of everybody life and practices from which one can pan across to wider theoretical frames. Partition narratives, in particular, have been suppressed, distorted or homogenized through the elision of linguistic, regional, ethnic or sectarian differences undergirding them. These little self-narratives, as paradigmatic stories of displacement trauma, could be fruitfully utilized in the theorizing of displacement in the discourses of nationalism, diaspora and post-colonialism.<sup>5</sup>

Until a couple of decades ago, the nationality column in all Indian government documents carried a footnote specifying the special category of the displaced distinguishing it from other citizenship qualifiers such as birth, descent, or domicile. The displaced Hindu Punjabi temporality invokes the nation's double time linguistically. Here is one community which suffered the nation's birth pangs, which entitles it to a particularly intimate kinship with the infant nation. Calendar time and dates of the nation compete with village event-time in the displaced Punjabi memory with the traumatic Partition experience forming the most significant temporal rupture. The secularized displaced Hindu Punjabi time traces its history to the birth of a secular nation carved out of an ancient communal core. Temporal breaks are marked here not by the prophets' births but deaths in the name of gods. The double time of the displaced Hindu Punjabi history is the pre-historic time of the tribal past, *Partition ton Pehlaan* (before Partition) and the secular nation time, *Partition ton Baad* (After partition)<sup>6</sup>. *Partition ton Pehlaan* was roughly the time of the spoken dialects; *Partition ton Baad* was the time of print languages, particularly the print language used in official documents<sup>7</sup>. How did the dialectal subject negotiate the vocabulary of

citizenship? The Punjabi subject transformed into the national citizen by learning the rules and regulations governing the idiom of nationness. The bordercrossing translation ritual literally took place in the interstices of the nation, marking many crossings - from the old to the new, from the sacral to the secular, from caste to class. Ramesh Sippy's telenovella *Buniyaad* captured this translational moment in the train the displaced family boards to India. Lajoji, whose gendered tale slants Sippy's Partition Narrative, chooses a Hindi, not a Punjabi, name for her newborn grand daughter. Her name - Bharati - ejects her from both her grandmothers' traditional Punjabi (Lajo, Veeranwali) and her mothers' modern Punjabi (Babli,) Narrative into the Hindi narrative of the modern Indian nation. By the time Bharati's daughter, Aditi, comes of age in the Indian English or Hinglish universe of millennial New Delhi in Mira Nair's *Monsoon Wedding*, Punjabi has become a vestigial trace emerging as slippage in moments of intimacy or emotion. But diasporic Punjabi filmmakers Deepa Mehta and Gurinder Chadha have joined hands with Nair in upgrading Punjabiness to an exoticized global vernacular.

### ***Partition ton Pehlaan (Before Partition)*** **From Pujandi to Satya Kumari**

#### **Pujandi**

She was named 'Pujandi' in her native dialect. Her progressive Arya Samaji husband made her enter the Great Indian Narrative by renaming her 'Satwanti'. Her son changed it to Satya Kumari in tune with post Independence trends in Hindu women's names. The story of several losses - of home, language and community - underwrites my grandmother's

inhabitation of her many names on which the nation's script is overwritten. Till her death in the mid nineties, she remained an alien in her own country, her foreignness accentuated by 'the foreignness of languages'. She spoke her singsong *Miyaanwali* that sounds alien even to East Punjabi speakers. Conversely, she never quite 'settled' in the Hindi heartland to which the family migrated. She located her home in a North Western Frontier Province, in a *pind* (village) called Bhakkhar. For her, the nation narrative was framed within a migrant narrative, first from the village to the city and then to another linguistic region. Her imagination translated the nation's alien geography as the loss of a home village and as the necessity of having to master a foreign language. Therefore, the first generation displaced Hindu Punjabi tenancy of the local dialect, a foreign tongue in the new land, problematizes the clash of old imaginings of the nation with the new. The lost home and community, without the compensating 'myth of return', are recovered in the traces of the dialect. Dialects, unlike the print languages on which the nation is imagined, speak of and from small places of face-to-face speech communities. They also remain the last resistive spaces in the homogenizing movement of print nationalism.

The pre-national Indian imagining of homeland was essentially a very small locality based in a region and on a dialect. The synonymy of home with a linguistic region in the Indian imaginary, invariably a small locality, becomes particularly problematic when the region turns overnight into a foreign country. The citizen subject reclaiming a home in another nation is a contradiction of the condition of compliance underwriting the formation of the national subject. Adrift in a nation that is not home, he zooms in so close on the



homeland that macro boundaries go out of focus. Home for the displaced Hindu Punjabi is a Punjabi *suba* frequently interchangeable with the *mulk/watan* or nation. The homeland, located in a narrowly defined Punjabi region with its particularized dialect, is a geographically bounded neighbourhood (river, mountain range, and climate.) Take, for example, the case of Miyaanwali's geographical constituency. Miyaanwali binds the district lying between Jhelum and Sindhu River on the North West Frontier Province, now in Pakistan. Across the Sindhu are other dialect regions, for instance, Derewaali in Dera Ghazi and Ismail Khan and Bannuwaali in Bannu.

### Satwanti

Besides, the proposed national language had to write the new nation on the traces of the Moghul scribal lingua. It must be noted that the communicational languages of old empires did not ever encroach on the cultural territories of speech. The switch from Urdu to Hindi as the official language heralds the emergence of the nation from the remains of the Empire. Courtly Urdu marks the graphocentric phase in the gap separating phonocentric dialects from print languages. Pre-partition educational practices reflect this transitional moment in a linguistic split between the Hindiwallahs and the Urduwallahs.<sup>8</sup> As the nation's birth becomes imminent, the nation-making process is expedited by the sharp switch-over to Hindi from Urdu.

The dialect and language divide splits the private and public spaces of modern civil society. The citizen subject is born in the separation of the dialect or private speech from language or public discourse. Pujandi's offspring, ill at ease in



the face-to-face intimacy of *Miyaanwali*, articulate their aspirations to Standard Punjabi's urbane inflections. Dialect has a strange meeting with language in the domestic space where Pujandi's rustic *Miyaanwaali* utterances are greeted with Standard Punjabi responses. Instead of resisting it, the dialect gives in to Punjabi's unifying space in the construction of modernity. The erasure of dialectal differences in Standard Punjabi enables the imagining of a unified Punjabi community. Standard Punjabi's modernity writes its difference from the closed space of local dialects, which circumscribe identity in rigid kinship structures of belonging.

Anderson's point about the homogenizing impact of print languages on speech communities is illustrated by the natural death of the dialect in the evolution of modern Indian print languages. The development of modern Punjabi opens up new identity routes on which the nation's myth might be engraved. But the inscription of the nation in modern Indian languages, be it Punjabi or Bengali, reveals a marked divergence from the unifying script the Indian nation sought to inscribe itself in. The adoption of modern Punjabi by educated speakers in Lahore and Lyallpur is a move away from small dialect-based identifications towards the beginnings of a modern Punjabi *kaum*. Speakers of different dialects congregate in the public sphere of a standardized Punjabi to construct a unified linguistic space, which will be seen to reveal a deep communal cleavage.

The imagining of the nation in the Punjabi language produces slippages of religion translating into separatist demands for two pure lands, Pakistan and Khalistan. Though the latter is also couched as a linguistic demand, the Hindu

Punjabi's linguistic nationalism is a disjuncture in the sacral pre-national communities. The convergence of Arya Samaaj's Hindu reformist programme with the Indian nationalist project offers the Hindu Punjabi a politically right path out of a prospective minority location.<sup>9</sup> Hindu Punjabis allegedly enter 'Hindi' as their mother tongue in the plebiscite for Khalistan and are dubbed traitors by the Akaali Dal. Punjabi enters the grand Indian masternarrative as the namesake of the *Mahabharata* queen Satwanti, as the Arya Samaaj movement sweeps over Punjab dissolving tribal names, gods and dialects in a 'return to the Vedas' Hinduism.

### Satya Kumari

Torn between Muslim and Sikh separatism, the Punjabi Hindu community's allegiance to Indian nationalism puts it in a linguistic bind. Consent to the nation narrative is interpreted as a tacit agreement to exchange place and language identities for a homogenous nation space signified by the national language. Mastery of the national language is flashed as a secret password to the citizenship of secular nation space. No other linguistic space cleared as wide a passage for the incursion of the national language as that of the displaced Hindu Punjabi. It betrays a naive faith in the reality of the nation myth, whose fragments interrogate its existence today.

Punjabi's family sought refuge from religious persecution in the dream of a secular nation forged in a national language. Its attempts to enter the nation narrative by learning the national language yielded much amusement. How does one get oneself understood in another language without making expensive mistakes? Lengthening Punjabi sounds

gives cause for unintentional humour and confusion. But Pujandi, now Satya Kumari, valiantly fights her way through the maze of Hindi to get across basics, no matter if her strange accent causes much merriment. Displaced from both the dialect and the vernacular tongue, the family's increasing fluency in the national language is an indicator of the success of the rehabilitation scheme. Shuttling between the Punjabi place of the resettlement colonies and the nation space of public places, their uneasy tenancy of the new language and place is accentuated by the differences in pronunciation, everyday practices and rituals. Punjabi's tribal rhythms translate into a harsh Hindi underlining the violence of the resettlement scheme. Though an entire generation comes of age in the resettlement colonies, home Punjabi still conflicts with public Hindi to produce an atrocious accent. Like all other old world customs, Punjabi speech might be practiced within the confines of the ghetto. But Hindi is the currency to be exchanged for assimilation into the new milieu. Though strains of Punjabi might still be heard in extended families where the first two generations find comfort in the home language nuclear set ups are almost Hindiized. These homes, saddled with the baggage of a foreign Punjabi in the new land, adjust to the changed surroundings by switching over to the national language the children bring home from school. The strange discourse between Punjabi and her children is repeated in another generation with the dialect being replaced by Standard Punjabi. It would take three decades for a booming Punjabi industry to transform the shame of refugee existence into a saga of pride and adventure. Though Punjabi cannot be restored, the employment of Punjabi Hindi in the public sphere will write not Punjabi foreignness but Punjabi difference. And



it would be another couple of decades before Punjabi returns as the loudest voice in the Indian popular cultural space.<sup>10</sup>

The myth of return distinguishes the self-constitution of other migrants from refugees. While most migrants are strangers, refugees are particularly vulnerable because they are unwelcome both at home and abroad. While other migrants find refuge in language and ethnicity from their estrangement in foreign tongues and nations, refugees fleeing from ethnic violence know the price of ethnic difference too well. They rush to eradicate every trace of foreignness by wiping off all visible signifiers of ethnicity. They make a conscious attempt to adopt local dress, manners and languages. The new settlers' status is decided by their political clout. Conquerors demand homage; the vanquished receive contempt, or pity, at best. When the homeless are given shelter in others' homes, they make space for themselves by making themselves small. The hidden spaces of the home alone remain the preserve of ethnicity. Here one may speak tribal dialects, observe archaic rituals, relish exotic cuisines, and sing primeval songs without the fear of reprisal. Refugees must acquire a working knowledge of the local language and customs to be able to do business in the adopted land. But they return every evening to the security of the dialect of the ghetto where the old place is reconstructed through memory in the dwellings, the food, the attire, and everyday habits.

Unfortunately, certain identity markers, such as the body or the accent, cannot be cast away as easily. The body and the accent inscribe their foreignness in the land of 'others'. The Punjabi language and ethnicity signified to the older residents an inferiorized refugee identity. The filth and squalor in refugee camps, eyesores on the nation's ancient cultural



capitals - Delhi, Kolkata and Lucknow - were internalized by displaced Hindu Punjabis as metaphors of cultural debasement. If Punjabi dialects sounded harsh and uncouth, Lahori Urdu was designated a poor countrycousin to the chaste Lakhnavi. Punjabi costume, designed on Muslim patterns, paraded its foreignness against the backdrop of starched dhotis and sarees. Punjabi music sounded too loud and cacophonous to classical Hindustani ears. Displaced Hindu Punjabis were willing to make any adjustment, linguistic or cultural, to make a home in the new nation. The displaced Hindu Punjabi male learned to write Hindi to know his rights and duties as citizen subject and worked overtime to enter the nation as producer. The displaced Hindu Punjabi female learned to speak Hindi to participate in the nation's public sphere and went through a complete costume changeover to recast herself as an Indian woman. The acquisition of the national language, Hindi, and the removal of visible Punjabi ethnocultural signifiers signaled Punjabi's death, which coincided with the displaced Hindu Punjabi subjects' transmutation into the Indian citizen. It took a couple of generations to make them shed their strong Punjabi accent and yet another to tone down their skin colour and physical features. It also took two generations for them to come home to the loss of a dialect and to the discovery that the submergence of the home in the dream of the nation was permanent.

### ***Partition ton Baad (Post Partition)***

Rushdie's deconstruction of English in *Midnight's Children* was viewed as signposting a significant moment in the decolonization process. But the deconstruction of Hindi a couple of years later in commercial filmmaker's magnum opus on the small screen, on the other hand, went completely

unnoticed in literary circles. But his homage to Punjabi Hindi, the way Hindi is spoken by Punjabi speakers, opened the Indian skies to regional variations of Hindi. Hindi films and Hindi language television have switched over to spoken vernacular Hindi registers from stilted Standard Hindi, thanks to Ramesh Sippy's mega tele-serial following the rags to riches story of a displaced Punjabi Hindu family. However, long before the titan of Hindi filmdom made the Punjabi *Puttar* part of South Delhi's *haute couture*, Hindi had always been deconstructed in Punjabi homes.<sup>11</sup> The way Rushdie works the structure of English outwards to inflect it with Hindi rhythms, displaced Hindu Punjabis altered Standard Hindi to infuse it with Punjabi 'structures of feeling'. The first, and perhaps the second, generation's Hindi vowel and semi-vowel disability, is turned by the third generation into an act of linguistic deconstruction.<sup>12</sup> Speaking its difference from Standard Hindi, displaced Punjabi Hindi scripts a difference in the Indian master narrative inscribed in the national language.

European Nationalism, converging on a print language, proved to be far from modular when confronted with the multiplicity of Indian languages. Followed to its logical extreme, cultural identifications, clustered around languages, disrupted the homogeneity of the nation space. The idea of the nation, a derivative discourse, required a link language to approximate to the European model. But fifty-five years after the birth of the nation, Indian languages are more likely to be relegated to oblivion by global English than by national Hindi. The ambivalence in the adoption of the national language by non-Hindi populations is replicated in the reluctant assent to the idea of the nation. Linguistic returns of the transitional era drive home the strength of these linguistic memories on which the nation myth was superimposed.

Identities are always relational and accretive. When an Indian meets a European, he identifies himself as an Indian; when he meets another Indian, he specifies his linguistic identity; when he meets another member of his linguistic group, he particularizes the region. Unlike that of other Indian linguistic groups, the displaced Hindu Punjabi's particularized place is not relational and accretive but disjunctive. Recalling a region-based memory preserved in the dialect that the national memory erased forever along with the homeland, this disjunctive small regional memory recalls the violence of the national superscript. As the sole signifier of a particular ethno-cultural identity, the loss of dialect is particularly poignant as a grim reminder of the permanence of the loss of the homeland. The displaced Hindu Punjabi's subjectivity is barbwired against real geographical space. Unlike the materiality of regional spaces inhabited by other dialects, the geo-region survives virtually as a memory. The displaced Hindu Punjabi's small regional memory reverses the real/imaginary dialectic of the region and the nation through this act of double imagining.

While the indelibility of vernaculars enables other linguistic returns, speakers of vanishing dialects can disrupt the homogenous nation space only by writing difference in the national language. The national language does not meet regional language difference but is repeated with a difference, a difference that does not return as the same. The repetition of the national language fractures its unified structure to inscribe the absence of the dialect. Neither Hindi nor Punjabi, the new language calls forth the violence of the idea of the nation. Like its speakers, the hybrid idiom is articulated in the transitory space of displacement. Neither at home in the new Hindi, nor



in the forgotten Punjabi, has the displaced Hindu Punjabi written through his discomfort in the loss of both home. The displacement narrative cannot be inscribed in a pre-given linguistic origin but a linguistic rupture that writes the loss of home. It constructs cultural identifications from a language of negation, which borrows familiar signs to signify difference rather than identity.

I speak Hindi, a language that is not mine. I don't speak Punjabi, which is my language. I speak Hindi because it is the only language I have. I speak Hindi fluently but with a difference that signifies my non-identity with its native speakers. I speak it with a trace of Punjabi to make it mine.

## Notes

1. See Jacques Derrida's collection of essays in '*Speaking a Language that is not my Own*' where he relates his own situation - a Mehrabaian speaking French - to the nature of language.
2. I am beholden to Tutun Mukherjee for this phrase and for leading me to believe that my little story has its place in the mega national narrative. I have discovered through my routine conversations with other Punjabis that this disability is confined to displaced Hindu Punjabis forced to settle outside Punjab, especially those raised in nuclear homes and through Sikh Punjabi language irrespective of the place of resettlement or migration.
3. I will use the term *Bharatvarshiya* to designate the pre-national community that the notion 'Indian' replaced. I choose this over the later term Hindustan because of its



sectarian and regional connotations. My preference is not rooted in any originary desire but the inclusiveness accorded by its anteriority, which locates all subsequent empires into a pre-national temporality.

4. Ironically, Punjabi speakers were in the habit of using Hindustan to refer to this region and Hindustani to the speakers of Hindi from whom they distinguished themselves. This linguistic slip, pointing to older linguistic communities, writes them out of the nation.
5. Diaspora theory has largely addressed itself to linguistic, ethnic or sectarian Diasporas overseas. Similar intra-national diasporas have not been theorized. Interesting, Bill Ashcroft's *Post-colonial Transformations* illustrated place and displacement by citing the Partition diaspora.
6. Among the Partition-displaced, Partition serves as the most important marker in dividing generations. The most important difference is those who were born before partition and those born later.
7. Though modern Punjabi evolved well before the Indian Partition, dialects continued to flourish in Punjab. The temporality of both modern Punjabi and Hindi is at odds with dialect time.
8. Khushwant Singh makes a jocular reference to the divide between the Hindi and Urduwallahs in Government College, Lahore in his obituary to the Hindi writer Bhisham Sahni. Though Hindi might have been available as an option, Urdu was the preferred language up to a

certain point. The majority of Punjabi Hindu males who were in high school before Partition have no knowledge of Urdu.

9. Punjab's demographic profile has changed after its several Partitions. Hindu Punjabis, a considerable majority in undivided Punjab, are a minority in present day Punjab.
10. The nineties have signaled the return of Punjabi to India via the Punjabi diaspora whose international success has created a global space for the Punjabi. Today no Bollywood film is complete without a Punjabi number.
11. *puttar* 'son' is an endearment used to address both male and female children by elders. Vaishna Narang, the linguist told me in a private conversation in October 1995 that Delhi Punjabis switched over from the Hindi equivalent *beta* 'son', to *puttar* post *Buniyaad*.
12. Punjabi speakers had problems with Hindi semi-vowels as in sounds ending with *kra* or *dra*. But it can be used to signify Punjabi difference, such as pronouncing *fikra* (anxiety) as *fikar* in Punjabi Hindi.

## References

- Ashcroft, Bill (2001). **Post-colonial Transformation**. New York: Routledge.
- Bhaba, Homi K. (1990). **Nations and Narrations**. London: Routledge.

Chadha, Gurinder (2002). **Bend it Like Beckham.** (*Film*)

Chatterjee, Partha (nd). **The Nation and its Fragments.**  
Delhi: OUP.

Derrida, Jacques (1982). **Margins of Philosophy.** Trans. Alan  
Bess. Chicago: Chicago Univ Press.

Hall, Stuart (1996). "New Ethnicities" in **Critical Dialogues in  
Cultural Studies.** (ed) David Morley & Kuan-Hsing  
Chan, London: Routledge.

Nair, Mira (2001). **Monsoon Wedding.** (*Film*)

Sippy, Ramesh (1984-85) **Buniyaad.** (TV Serial)

# HOW DOES SHAKESPEARE BECOME ŚĒKH PĪR IN KANNADA<sup>1</sup>

T.S.SATYANATH

*Abstract:* The purpose of the paper is to identify and understand the cultural processes that went into the process of translating Shakespearian plays into Kannada during the Navōdaya (renaissance) and Navya (modern) periods of modern Kannada literature. Translation has been viewed here more as a cultural process involving domination, assimilation, and contestation rather than as a literary act of bringing a text from one language into another. Translation as an act of transfer of knowledge, information and ideas from one language to another is a colonial enterprise and which implies certain relationships of power among the languages and cultures involved. Thus, in order to understand the postcolonial translations of a linguistically constructed region, we need to interrogate the colonial links, nature of interrelationship among languages involved in the contact and their linguistic history. Tracing the process of translating Shakespeare in a chronological order from the colonial to the postcolonial period, the paper points out that the selections and avoidance of texts for translation, the popularity of certain texts revealed



*by multiple translations of a text, transformations in the title of translations, deviations in translation etc. actually reveal the processes of constructing dominations and counter constructions. The paper also attempts to incorporate the role of the theatre both professional and amateur, and its audience in bringing about such changes and transformations.*

Some Kannada theatre critics have observed that during the early phase of Kannada theatre (1880-1920), Shakespeare was known popularly as *Śekh Pīr*. Some have claimed that he was also popular by the name, *Śēṣappayyar* (Sheshappa Iyer). Considering the fact that such instances have been noticed in the history of English theatre (Balurao 1966: viii), it would not be surprising if such a speculation is actually true. Such tendencies clearly represent the complexity of cultural processes operating in the nativization of non-native entities and suggest the presence of ambivalences in a culture undergoing transformation. Students of modern Kannada literature are familiar with the term used to address the white master, *biḷi-dore*, 'white king' akin to the term *gaurāṅga mahāprabhu* in Hindi and other modern Indo-Aryan languages. Interestingly, the folk ballad of *Sangoḷli Rāyaṇṇa*, collected during the later part of the nineteenth century and published with an English translation by Fleet (1885) in the *Indian Antiquary* uses a derogatory term, *kempu-mūtiya-kōti/manga*, 'red-faced monkey' to refer to British soldiers. In this connection, it is interesting to note that the word in use to refer to the white-woman was *dore-sāni*, 'king's courtesan' Considering the fact that feminine forms in designator words such as *brāhmaṇa* (*brāhmaṇi*), *rāja* (*rāṇi*) etc. usually translate as 'the housewife'; and 'the queen', the derivative component of *sani* to refer to the white

woman is not only startling but also intriguing. If cultural constructions such as the 'manly Englishman and effeminate Indian', '*bīli-dore*' and "*gaurāṅga mahāprabhu*" could become constructions with the purpose of dominating the other, then terms such as *kempu-mutiya-kōti/manga* and *dore-sāni* could as well be read as counter-constructions.<sup>2</sup> In this sense, inscribing and re-inscribing processes such as Shakespeare and Śēkh Pīr or Śēṣappayyar have an inherent potential to be read as constructions and counter-constructions.

\* The terms that I have chosen in the title of the paper suggest certain inherent ideological positions. As a matter of fact, the names *Shakespeare* and *Śēkh Pīr* suggest colonial and colonized entities on the one hand and impact and reception on the other. Even a cursory survey of the writings on Shakespearian translations in Indian languages clearly demonstrates the existence of a power relationship of that sort. Kannada scholars have pointed out that a newly developing modern Kannada intellectual community incorporated Shakespeare to such an extent that he was popularly referred to as Śēkh Pīr.<sup>3</sup> Locating such a contact of literary and theatrical interaction within the context of colonial rule coupled with an influence theory centred approach for comparison has far reaching consequences not only in the positioning of Shakespeare but also in locating his 'postcolonial' position. Scholars argue that both literally and metaphorically colonial practices such as census, maps and surveys are practices of dominating the colony and its peoples (cf. Anderson 1983). The processes of 'discovering' the 'undiscovered' lands and peoples, through projects like voyages, enumeration, cartography and surveys, thereby textualizing and inscribing 'others' in terms of numerical and

spatial imaging, have all been a part of the dominating process of colonization. All projects of translation, be it translating the *Bible* into a native language as part of the missionary activity, or compilation and codification of law texts like the *nyāyaśāstra*, or defining linguistically ordered power relationships through terminological categorizations such as donor - recipient, original - translated etc., are activities in which the land, people and their representations were constructed through a process of inscribing, literally 'writing over', existing concepts, categories and terms, often existing in the oral tradition, by the concepts, categories and terminologies of the colonizers. Even when such a systematic replacement is not possible through imperialistic domination, the distortion of the concepts, categories and terminologies of the colonized land and people could be seen as an inscribing process. (Re) naming or the process of identifying, when not done according to native conventions and practices, signifies domination and control, both in symbolic and literal terms. We need to notice here that in all cases of colonized lands, people and their representation, European explorers, enumerators, cartographers and ethnographers, and others were also translating either a region or a culture or a language, literally re-inscribing them, as the concepts, categories and terminologies of the people were either replaced by new ones, or were distorted to suit Europeanized forms. The process of replacement also involved marginalization and denigration of native concepts, categories and terminologies, and eventually relegation of the colonized people to the background. Renaming, redefining or translating, processes used to suit colonial conventions could become counter constructions.



A noteworthy characteristic of theatre in Indian languages is the conspicuous absence of dramatic texts. Despite a long-standing Sanskrit theatre tradition, well attested through *śāstra* texts, plays and performing traditions, such a claim cannot be made for modern Indian languages beyond the 15-16<sup>th</sup> century A.D. The first Kannada play, Singararayya's *mitravindā gōvinda*, written in 1860, is a rough translation of Sriharsa's Sanskrit play *ratnāvali*. Although the evidence of *yaksagana* plays, the folk plays from coastal Karnataka region, is available from palm leaf manuscripts right from the 16<sup>th</sup> century A.D., the contact with the west and the English education system gave a new direction to theatre and drama in Kannada. The first translation from Sanskrit was of Kalidasa, of his play titled as *śākuntala nāṭakavu* by Shesha Ramachandra Churamuri in 1870. Similarly, the first translation from English was that of Shakespeare, *The Comedy of Errors* by Chennabasappa, with the title *nagadavarannu nagisuva nāṭaka*, which was published in 1871.<sup>5</sup>

Scholars of Kannada and Indian drama, from Murthy Rao (1964, 1966) to Chaudhri (2002), have consistently felt that Kannada's response to Shakespeare represents two ambivalent and parallel streams of sensibilities, one corresponding to the literary tradition and the other to the stage tradition. However, it is worth noting that Murthy Rao actually notes that stage versions preceded literary versions.

*The earliest translations (they were really a cross between translation and adaptation) of Shakespeare came from theatre lovers rather than academic men. (Murthy Rao 1964:63)*



However, Chaudhri's (2002) generalization reduces the significance of the precedence of stage versions and brings the literary version in par with the stage ones.

*Renderings of Shakespeare in the south Indian language Kannada might be taken as an allegory of the reception of Shakespeare in India. They often run concurrently on two planes; one is a reader's translation following literary, largely Sanskritic norms of form and diction; the other, a racy stage version with sensational touches, colloquialisms and popular songs. Between them, these two tendencies epitomize much of what happens to Shakespeare in India.*

As one of the aims of the present paper is to demonstrate the significant role played by the sensibilities of theatre community as revealed in the stage versions of Shakespeare in Kannada, it is important that we notice that views such as that of Chaudhri can systematically contribute and stabilize the attempts of constructing a literary taste-centred poetics rather than a stage-centred one. In addition, such attempts might also result in homogenizing the vibrant and pluralistic literary and stage traditions existing side by side. A majority of Kannada scholars who have written about drama come from a literature background. I have pointed out elsewhere (Satyanath 2002) how a new sensibility for tragedy developed in the Kannada literary context during the early part of the twentieth century and the controversies and debates that surrounded its emergence. Shamaraya (1962) observes that it was quite natural for Kannada playwrights to look for a great dramatist like Shakespeare from English in the same way they looked up to Kalidasa in the case of

Sanskrit. On the other hand, it was equally important to attempt to demonstrate the agenda of the Orientalist project of a harmonious Ancient East - Modern West encounter through translating the two great playwrights, Kalidasa from the East and Shakespeare from the West.

A brief outline of the characteristic Shakespearian translation in Kannada has been attempted here. It would be out of place here to attempt a systematic analysis of all Shakespearian translations. A rough estimate of Shakespeare's translations in Kannada would be about one hundred and eleven, spanning a period of 120 years (1871-1992). These include free translations, adaptations and prose renderings. In all, only about twenty out of Shakespeare's thirty-six plays have been translated (55.5%). All the historical plays except for the first, second and third parts of *King Henry the VI* have remained untranslated. About twelve plays comprising both comedies and tragedies have been translated into Kannada. Appendix-I provide tabulated information of Shakespearian translations in Kannada and provide information about the translated title, year of translation, name of the translator, language on which the translation is based and certain interesting remarks. The frequency of translations of different plays is given in Table- 1.

Original Title	No. Of Translations
<i>Hamlet</i>	18
<i>The Merchant of Venice</i>	10
<i>Romeo and Juliet</i>	10
<i>Macbeth</i>	10
<i>Taming of the Shrew</i>	8
<i>Julies Caesar</i>	8
<i>Othello</i>	8
<i>The Tempest</i>	8
<i>As You Like It</i>	5
<i>King Lear</i>	4
<i>A Mid Summer Night's Dream</i>	4
<i>The Winter's Tale</i>	4
<i>The Comedy of Errors</i>	3
<i>Cymbeline</i>	2
<i>Twelfth Night</i>	2
<i>All's Well that Ends Well</i>	1
<i>Antony and Cleopatra</i>	1
<i>King Henry VI</i>	1
<i>The Two Gentlemen of Verona</i>	1
<i>Coriolanus</i>	1
<i>Pericles</i>	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>110</b>

Table 1: Table showing the frequency of Shakespearian Translations in Kannada

In general, translations prior to 1920 could be called adaptations and that of the post-1920 period may be said to be literal translations suggesting their closeness to the originals. It should be noted that the pre-1920 period is the period of the precursors for modern Kannada literature, be it

fiction, drama or poetry. Modern literature in Kannada is conspicuously marked by events such as the establishment of the University of Mysore, the publication of the translations of English Romantic poems in Kannada, *ingliš-gītegaḷu* by B M Srikanthiah (1921), the first social play *ṭoḷḷu-gaṭṭi* 'the hollow and the strong' by T P Kailasam (1921) and the first novel *māddiduṇṇō -maharāya* 'eat whatever you have cooked', a proverb with the meaning 'suffer the consequences of your deeds' by M S Puttanna (1916).

Around the same time, Hattiyangadi Narayana Rao and his associates in the Bombay Karnataka region and Manjeshwara Govinda Pai and others in the coastal Karnataka region were engaged in similar activities. It should be noted that a majority of the translations for which the date of publication are not available in Appendix-I, happen to be translations from the pre-1920 period. A conspicuous aspect of these early translations is that the titles, names of the characters, locales, settings, sequences, and in certain cases even the endings (tragedy to comedy) have undergone modifications. However, Deva (1993) observes that the earliest literal translation of Shakespeare is that of *Macbeth* by D V Gundappa (1936) and all translations prior to that can be considered as adaptations. If we accept this view, almost half of Shakespearean translations in Kannada must be categorized as adaptations. As this cut off point also marks the beginning of the decay of professional Kannada theatre, it also suggests a periodization divide between translations (adaptations) centred on professional theatre and texts that are literary translations.

A curious aspect of some of the early translations is that the original English text has not been used for



translation. Table- 2 provides information about the translations that have been done based on texts available in other Indian languages.

Original Title	Translated Title	Year	Translator	Language
<i>All's Well that Ends Well</i>	<i>satīmaṇi-vijaya</i>	1897	Somanathayya	Telugu
<i>The Comedy of Errors</i>	<i>bhrāntivilāsa</i>	1876	Venkatacharya	Bengali
<i>The Taming of the Shrew</i>	<i>gayyāliyanu-sādhumāḍuvike</i>	1987	Somanathayya	Telugu
<i>Othello</i>	<i>padmini</i>	1911	Srikantha Shastry	Telugu
<i>The Taming of the Shrew</i>	<i>trāṭikānāṭaka</i>	1920	Honnapuramath	Marathi
<i>The Merchant of Venice</i>	<i>venīsu-nagarada-vartaka</i>	1906	Venkatacharya	Bengali
<i>The Winter's Tale</i>	<i>māṇjuvāṇi</i>	1914	Srikanthashastry	Telugu <sup>6</sup>

Table 2: Kannada translations of Shakespeare based on the texts available in other Indian languages.

It is interesting to point out that almost all translations belong to the early phase of Shakespearian translations in Kannada. Translations based on Telugu are by Vireshalingam Pantulu, those from Bengali are from Iswara Chandra Vidyasagar and those of Marathi are by Kelkar. A majority

of these are based on Charles Lamb's prose renderings of Shakespeare's plays.

Another interesting aspect of Shakespearian translations in Kannada is the way the genre of drama has been conceived in terms of indigenous genres. Accordingly, we can see that the titles have been translated as *nāṭaka* (drama), *carite/caritre* (life-story), and *kathe* (story). The comedies are usually given a title that ends with *vijaya* (victory), *vilāsa* (romance) and *pariṇaya* (marriage). Such titles were frequently used both in folk and professional theatres during the early modern phase of Kannada theatre. Similarly, dramatic, prosaic, blank verse and classical styles have been used frequently in these translations. Table-3 provides information about titles that have been used by translators.

Original Title	Translated Title	Year	Translator
<i>Othello</i>	<i>rāghāvendrarāv-nāṭaka</i>	1885	Churamuri
<i>Othello</i>	<i>śūrasēna-carite</i>	1895	Basavappashastry
<i>As You Like It</i>	<i>kamalāvatī-pariṇaya</i>	n.d	Shamaray
<i>All's Well that Ends Well</i>	<i>satīmaṇi-vijaya</i>	1897	Somanathayya
<i>King Lear</i>	<i>hēmacandrarāja-vilāsa</i>	1899	Puttanna
<i>The Taming of the Shrewd</i>	<i>candīmardana-nāṭakam</i>	1910	Lakshmanarao
<i>The Taming of the Shrewd</i>	<i>trāṭikā-nāṭaka</i>	1920	Honnapuramatha

<i>The Merchant of Venice</i>	<i>pāncālī-pariṇayam</i>	1890	Anandarao
<i>A Midsummer-night's Dream</i>	<i>pramīlārjunīya</i>	c.1890	Srikantheshagowda
<i>A Midsummer-night's Dream</i>	<i>vasaṇṭayāmīni-swapanacamatkāra-nāṭaka</i>	c.1890	Vasudevacharya
<i>Romeo and Juliet</i>	<i>kamalākṣa-padmagandhiyara-kathe</i>	1881	Bhadvada
<i>Romeo and Juliet</i>	<i>rāmavarma-līlavati - caritre</i>	1889	Anandarao
<i>Romeo and Juliet</i>	<i>ramavarma- līlāvati - caritre</i>	n.d	Jayarajacharya
<i>Cymbeline</i>	<i>jayasimharāja-caritre</i>	1881	Puttanna
<i>Cymbeline</i>	<i>jayasimharāja-caritre</i>	1907	Nanjappa

Table 3: Table giving the genre specific information in the translated titles of Shakespearean translations in Kannada.

In order to understand the dynamics of the deviations detailed above, a systematic mapping of information about the translations is necessary. In the absence of such information, our attempt must be of limited scope. However, to point out the significance of such an approach, I have attempted here to briefly discuss the eight Kannada translations of *Romeo and Juliet* and some of the criticisms that have been levelled against these translations (See Table 4). Out of the eight, three translations, Shanmukhayya (1952), Shankaranarayana Rao (c.1950) and Huyilagola (1963) are prose translations. The other translations are all

from the pre-1920 period and are stage adaptations of the original play. Apart from the fact that a tragedy has become *kathe* (story) and *carite* (life story), they have been given a happy ending, thereby transforming a tragedy into a comedy. This is intriguing considering the fact that not all tragedies have been transformed into comedies in Kannada. First of all, it is important to note that it is only with regard to the translations from English that such freedom has been taken. During the early phase of modern Kannada literature, plays from English on the one hand and Sanskrit and other Indian languages on the other were brought into Kannada. However, it is only in the case of adaptations from English that liberties have been taken by translators and not with the translations from Sanskrit or other Indian languages. Many early translators [(Puitanna 1881), (Srikantheshagowda 1895)] have sharply defended their changes in theme, locale, characterization etc by citing cultural differences between the two cultures involved in the process of translation. It is noteworthy that in several early translations of *Macbeth* (Chennabasappa 1881), *Othello* (Churamuri 1885) and *Hamlet* (Anandaraao 1905), the tragic endings of the original have been retained. Only in the case of *Romeo and Juliet* we notice that the tragic ending has been changed to a happy one. Deva (Deva 1993) observes that there appears to be an influence of the episode of *sāvitri-satyavān* in these adaptations. However, in the subsequent Kannada criticism of Shakespearian translations, translators have been harshly criticized for such deviations.



Translated Title	Year	Translator
<i>kamalākṣa-padmagandhiyara-kate</i>	1881	Bhandivada
<i>rāmavarma-līlāvati</i>	c.1889	Varadachar
<i>rāmavarma-līlāvati -caritre</i>	1889	Anandaraao
<i>rāmavarma-līlāvati -caritre</i>	1889	Jayarajacharya
<i>rōmiyō-and-jūliyeṭ</i>	n.d.	Basavappashastry
<i>rōmiyō- and -jūliyeṭ</i>	n.d.	Srikantheshagowda
<i>asūyā-pariṇāma</i>	1931	Amruthachari
<i>rōmiyō -mattu- jūliyeṭ</i>	C.1950	Shankaranarayanarao
<i>rōmiyō -jūliyeṭ</i>	1952	Shanmukhayya
<i>rōmiyō -mattu-jūliyeṭ</i>	1963	Huyilagola

Table 4: Kannada Translations of *Romeo and Juliet*.

With the exception of Bhandivada's translation (Bhandivada 1881), which was done in North Karnataka, all the pre-1920 translations done in Mysore were meant for different professional theatre groups. Basavappashastry was commissioned by the royal court of Mysore to translate *śākuntalam* and *Othello* for the staging requirements of the Palace Company. During pre-1920 days *Romeo and Juliet* as *rāmavarma-līlāvati* was a very popular play and used to be performed by three different professional theatre companies in Mysore alone and all of them appear to have been published during the same year. Ratnavali Nataka Sabha used the script of Varadachar, Chamarajendra Nataka Sabha used the script of Jayarajacharya and Rajadhani Nataka Mandali

used Ananadaraao's script. The performance of the same play by three professional theatre companies and its translations by five different writers in a single city at a particular point of time reveals that a new sensibility was emerging with regard to modern Kannada drama. It was a complex relationship between modernizers, performers, translators and audiences, well beyond the reach of academic criticism of the intellectuals for some time to come. Deva (Deva 1993) points out that only a few translators like Kerur Vasudavacharya, Bhandivada and Srikatheshagowda were able to capture at least a few aspects of Shakespeare's originality, and that others failed to capture the cultural significance of the originals. However, it needs to be pointed out that such criticism actually marginalizes the instrumental role played by these translations in the cultural transformations of the early phase of Kannada drama.

It is important for us to explore the reasons behind these adaptations. Antecedent criticisms to Deva's critique of Shakespearian translations reveal a bias of literary criteria on the one hand and fidelity to the original on the other, completely ignoring the condition that the early adaptations were done for the theatre. Shamaraya's (1962:146) harsh criticism of the happy ending in Anandarao's (1889) translation of *Romeo and Juliet* - one of the earliest systematic attempts to survey and review modern Kannada drama - makes this point clear:

*The absurdity par excellence is the self-conceived last act of the play, in which Pujiyapada Yogishwara (Fraiar Lawrence) prays to Lord Vishnu, who appears on the stage, appreciates Ramavarma's (Romeo) love*

*for Lilavati (Juliet) and Lilavati's chaste virtues and brings them back to life. The translator, in an attempt to bring Ramavarma and Lilavati back into life, has murdered the great dramatist (śēkspiyar mahākavi). The saying that 'translators are traitors/murderers' has actually become true here. When it is often told that this was a very popular play, we not only need to shake our heads (taledūgu; in total approval; also rejecting something totally) about the dramatic skills of its actors but also have to put a big question mark on the taste (rasa-śuddhi) of the audience who use to enjoy such performances.*

This is only one of several instances typical of the critical approach adopted by the critics of modern Kannada drama in their attempts to clarify the early theatrical translations of Shakespeare. It clearly demonstrates the creative literary criteria of an elitist approach and the prefixed power relationship between the original and translation. The effect of such an approach had far reaching consequences on the Kannada drama to the extent that it not only advocated a literary and elitist approach, but also encouraged an attitude of looking down on the professional theatre, an attitude that eventually led to self-denigration and to the drama's subsequent downfall. Subsequent criticism of Kannada drama shows scant interest in the performance aspect of early Shakespearian translations. In order to understand the inherent biases of this approach, we need to probe the issue further. Shamaraya was an academic, literary historian and critic. He considers D.V.Gundappa's (Gundappa 1936) translations of *Macbeth* to be more literary

than (and hence superior to) those of Srikantheshagowda's (Srikantheshagowda 1895) adaptation. A comparison of the two Kannada translations of the famous lines spoken by Lady Macbeth during her sleepwalk shows this clearly:

*Out, damned spot! Out I say.*

*chi chi, asahya kaleye, tolagu tolagu,  
tolagendarū tolagadiruve. (Srikantheshagowda  
1895)*

*hōgu, haḷu cikkiye hōgu, nānu hēḷuttēne.  
(Gundappa 1936)*

It is unfortunate that non-Kannadigas cannot appreciate the appropriateness and the colloquial style apparent in Srikantheshagowda's translation. In spite of the alleged 'deviation', Srikantheshagowda's lines are lively, dynamic and poetic whereas Gundappa's translation, despite claims that they are 'highly literary' (Shamaraya 1962 and Deva 1993), is dull and static. However, without even considering that the former was a performing text and that the latter one was for study as a text, Shamaraya (Shamaraya 1962:147) not only uses literary criteria for evaluation but also concludes as follows:

*Srikantheshagowda has the heart of a poet; but he does not have the appropriate Kannada scholarship to translate the original feelings that he is experiencing into Kannada.*

Subsequent criticism thus obscures and marginalizes the achievements of early translations and brings text-centred translations to the focus of analysis. This is a significant



departure not only with reference to the theatre sensibilities of the early adaptations phase, but also from the subsequent progressive literature phase (1930s and 1940s). Punekar (Punekar 1974) points out that there was a period of a lively and healthy relationship between theatre movements (professional and amateur) and progressive writers like A.N. Krishnarao (A.Na.Kru), and D.K.Bharadvaj. These writers wrote serious criticism in theatre journals about the performances of professional companies and about leading performances like Varadacharya, Mahammad Peer, Bellary Raghavacharya and their contemporaries.<sup>7</sup> Punekar further points out that the stiff-necked attitude of the newly emerging white collar middle class dealt the deathblow to professional theatre companies. They thought it was not only below their dignity to watch plays being performed by professional companies but they also developed either a total arrogance towards theatre or began patronizing amateur groups. Such changes not only eroded the public patronage that professional companies had hitherto enjoyed, but also had far reaching consequences for the theatre sensibilities of the community itself. To appreciate how the community gradually lost its sensibilities, and eventually developed an entirely new set of sensibilities - a development that resulted in the death of the professional theatre movement - we need to visualize the experience of Girish Karnad, as told in his own words.

Karnad has attempted to map his links with the folk-professional-amateur theatres though the words used originally were 'a search for a new theatre'. The rural theatre's input for him consisted of a variety of visiting Parsi theatre groups and the local folk theatre tradition.

*In my childhood, in a small town in Karnataka, I was exposed to two theatre forms that seem to represent irreconcilably different worlds. Father took the entire family to see plays staged by the troupes of professional actors called nāṭak companies, which toured the countryside through out the year. The plays were staged with semi-permanent structures on proscenium stages, with wings and drop curtains, and were illuminated by petromax lamps.*

*Once the harvest was over, I went with the servants to sit up nights watching the more traditional yakṣagāṇa performances. The stage, a platform with a black curtain, was erected in the open air and was lit by torches. (Karnad 1989:21)*

However, Karnad's attitude to native performing traditions underwent a change during the course of his education. The onslaught of modernism not only dealt a deathblow to some of the native performing traditions, but also brought forth a significant change in the artistic sensibilities of the newly educated, to the extent that the need for native performing traditions was not felt by the new generation.

*By the time I was in my early teens, the natak companies had ceased to function and yakṣagāṇa had begun to seem quaint, even silly, to me. Soon we moved to a big city. This city had a college, and electricity, but no professional theatre. (Karnad 1989:21)*

An abrupt discontinuity with the native performing traditions on the one hand, and a changing conceptual world due to education is clearly evident from Karnad's account:

*I saw theatre only when I went to Bombay for my post-graduate studies. One of the first thing that I did in Bombay was to go see a play, which happened to be Strindberg's Miss Julie, directed by the brilliant young Ebrahim Alkazi. I have been told since then that it was one of Alkazi's less successful productions. The papers tore it into shreds the next day. But when I walked out of the theatre that evening, I felt as though I had been put through an emotionally or even a physically painful rite of passage. I had read some written playwrights in college, but nothing had prepared me for the power and violence I experienced that day. (Karnad 1999:21-22)*

Though a bias towards modernity is clearly visible in his words, Karnad's links among folk, professional and amateur theatres are not clearly visible, but we can also note that he has constantly appropriated traditional material from the folk and professional theatre alike, both in its form and content. Karnad's experience, seen in the light of his words here, rightly theorizes the transformation that took place in the sensibilities among the theatre-going community of Karnataka. Historians of theatre (c.f. Amur 1995) have pointed out that by the 1940s the golden days of the professional theatre companies came to an end, with companies gradually closing one theatre after another. Around the same time the literary translation of

Shakespearian plays began appearing, thereby serving the purposes of the amateur groups and the students who studied them as texts. In other words, Kannada theatre gradually lost his mass patronage and took the form of leisure courses in schools and colleges. At the same time however a pertinent question arises about the popularity that early translations could achieve.

Considering the fact apart from the folk theatre tradition, there is a conspicuous absence of plays in medieval Indian literatures, the factors that initiated the emergence of interest in theatre and its sustenance, and in particular its attempts at modernization and denigration inflicted on them by the label 'adaptations' needs further probing. The answers for this have to be sought in the emergence of Parsi theatre and the movement of folk theatre performing groups from one region to another, thereby leading to their enrichment through mutual absorption of ideas, themes and styles from whatever quarter they could. At the same time, these adaptations could also be viewed as culturally unique ways of dealing with cultural imperialism and domination, thereby distorting and regionalizing universalistic tendencies. After all, our cultural uniqueness and identities are crucial tools for constructing counter-constructions against any sort of domination.

My intention is not to draw a comparison between the early theatre-centred adaptations and the subsequent textual and literary translations of Shakespearian plays by using qualitative criteria. But the very presence of a massive body of adaptations and the lively dialogue between the audience and the performers needs to be explained. In addition, we also need to understand how such a sensibility - understood



as a cultural phenomenon - was able to develop. This however is a difficult task, considering that there are no documents available on this subject. Long ago, Kurtukoti (1969) made an appeal for a historiography of Kannada theatre, an appeal that has remained unfulfilled to this day.

In order to understand the text-and-performance relationship of early Shakespearian translations, we first need to understand the nature of text and performance during the periods of medieval Kannada literature. As mentioned earlier, there was no tradition of written plays in Kannada, despite a longstanding folk theatre existed in oral tradition. The texts of *kumāravyāsa bhārata* (16<sup>th</sup> century A.D.) or *torave rāmāyaṇa* (17<sup>th</sup> century A.D.) were in use only in recitation performances called gamaka-vācana. Although several palm-leaf manuscripts of the two texts were available, their oral transmission has continued even to the present day thorough gamaka- vācana and folk plays. That the Kannada folk-plays based on the *Rāmāyaṇa* and the *Mahābhārata* episodes contain verses from the Yakṣagāṇa performances of coastal Karnataka region is well known to students of Kannada literature. The erasure of the distinction between the written and oral text in literary conventions - or to put it the other way, the lack of a distinction between the written and the oral text on the one hand and the crucial role of performing traditions in shaping and determining the texts on the other - has played an important role, both at the conceptual and performing levels, eventually shaping the construction, composition, maintenance and transmission of textual/performing traditions. These salient features of medieval Kannada literature continued in folk plays and the newly emerging Parsi theatre during the nineteenth century. The early precursors of modern Kannada drama, which

include several Shakespearean translations, should be seen as an interface that continued the sensibilities of an earlier performing tradition into the newly emerging literary (text-centred) sensibilities. The deviation or lack of 'fidelity' that have been pointed out in the early Shakespearean translations in Kannada need to be understood and appreciated as cultural maneuvers of an interface in transforming culture in which the nature of the text and its performance was in a state of flux and change. In the prefaces to their translations, M.S. Puttanna and Srikantheshagowda attempted to justify this by suggesting cultural appropriateness as a justification for the liberties they take.<sup>8</sup>

The paucity of plays during the medieval period in the regional languages of India has already been pointed out. However, nineteenth and early twentieth century theatre in Kannada and neighbouring languages is marked by the movement of theatre groups from one region to another and thus constituting a mutual influence on each other's sensibilities. The annual seasonal migration of the *yakshagāna* performing groups during the dry season in the coastal Karnataka region touching places of religious, commercial, aristocratic and public patronage serves as a pointer to understand the nature of movements of performing groups, both traditional and Parsi theatre companies, during the nineteenth century. Marathi theatre historians believe that the *yakshagāna* group from Karki (North Kannada district in Karnataka) visited Sangli (Maharashtra) in 1842 and performed a *yakshagāna* play under the patronage of Srimanta Appa Saheb Patavardhan. The performance encouraged Patwardhan to take the initiative to stage the first Marathi play, *sītāsvayamvar* written by Vishnudas Bhave in 1843. In addition, the *yakshagāna* group from Gokarna

(North Kannada district in Karnataka) visited Icalakarnjīkar during 1948-49. Tradition records that the *yakṣhagāna* groups went as far as Baroda and performed in the royal court there. The Oriya *prahlāda-nāṭaka*, performed in the Guṇjam district has been claimed by its performers to come from Karnataka about 150-200 year ago. This suggests the nature of interaction that existed across linguistic regions during the pre-Parsi theatre days. The impact of Kannada folk plays was so profound on Marathi theatre that the tunes of the famous Marathi play *sangīta saubhadṛā* of Kirloskar Nataka Mandali were based on the tunes of *śrīkrṣṇa-pārijāta*, a folk performing tradition of north Karnataka.<sup>9</sup> At the same time, the Marathi plays staged by this company, in particular, *śākuntalā*, *sangīta saubhadṛā*, *vikramōrvaśīya* and *rāmarājya* were extremely popular among theatre lovers of North Karnataka.

On the other hand, Baliwala Company, a Parsi theatre company from Maharashtra visited the royal court of Mysore in 1881, a visit that was responsible for the emergence of the Palace Company with the Maharaja of Mysore as its patron. Basavappashastry's translations of *śākuntalā* and *sūrasēna-carite* (Macbeth) were rewritten for performance by the palace Company. The Marathi theatre group became so popular in the North Karnataka region that Altekar's Hindu Nataka Mandali, which was founded in 1869, had a five-month 'camp' in Dharwar during its 1873 tour. The famous Marathi Company, Kirloskar Nataka Mandali toured the North Karnataka region during 1886 and 1889. Similarly, the drama companies of Sangalīkar and Icalakarnjīkar used to tour the North Karnataka region. The presence of Marathi theatre groups in the North Karnataka region was so



prominent that Shanta Kavi wrote a poem strongly reacting to the dominance of Marathi theatre:

*Wherever you see, there is the fame of Marathi  
dramas*

*Wherever you see, there are viewers of Marathi  
dramas*

*Wherever you see, there move the Marathi stage  
actors*

*Wherever you see, there is a performance of  
Marathi drama*

*Karnataka itself has become full of Marathi  
language.<sup>10</sup>*

The multilingual situation in the North Karnataka region was so vibrant that it is said that the Tantupurastha Nataka Mandali of Dharwar had multilingual actors in its repertoire who could fluently speak Kannada, Marathi and Hindi (Dakkhini), an advantage that enabled the company to perform plays in the Marathi- Kannada- and Telugu-speaking regions. It is also said that *ṭrāṭikā-nāṭaka*, the Marathi translation of *The Taming of the Shrew* by Kelkar was performed in Dharwar in 1908. This interaction among theatre groups was not confined to the Kannada and Marathi speaking regions. Tamil and Telugu language theatre groups used to visit specific regions and cities in the Kannada-speaking regions to cater to the needs of their respective speech communities, and the Kannada theatre groups did the same in the Telugu and Tamil regions. The visit of Gubbi Viranna's company to Madras and its popularity are well known. Bellary Raghavacharya's performance as a great



actor in Telugu, Kannada and English plays has found abundant mention in the literature on Kannada theatre.<sup>11</sup> Artists, actors, musicians and painters alike were invited from their linguistic regions by the companies of the other regions. Kulkarni (2002) notes that the famous Marathi stage actor Balagandharva, after witnessing Vamanarao Master's performance (who was a renowned actor and the owner of the Vishwagunadarsha Sangita Nataka Mandali), invited him to join his Company. Vamanarao, it is said, politely declined the offer. Similarly, Alagiriswamy, the painter, who used to prepare the scenes for Govindaswamy Nayakar's Tamil Company, was invited by Vamanarao to help him in a Kannada version of *lankādahana*, a play that subsequently made the Tamil theatre company famous.

Apart from the fact that new plays emerged during the period under discussion, we can also witness the emergence of new folk plays, in which the authors have documented their names in the play. Two popular folk-plays of north Karnataka region, *sangya-bāḷya* and *kaḍḷēmaṭṭi-sṭēṣan-māṣṭar*, for which the author's name is available have been claimed to be written during the 1860s. In addition, if we consider the fact that the first Kannada play, Singarārya's *mitrayindā gōvindā*, was also written in 1860, then the changes that were taking place in the mid-nineteenth century Kannada theatre become conspicuous and evident. It is worth pointing out here that *sankalpa siddhiyu* (*As you Like It*), the earliest adaptation of Shakespeare, was done in the style of *yakṣagāna*, the folk theatre of coastal Karnataka.

All these events suggest that there was a theatre-centred sensibility during the nineteenth century, which, on the one hand, had its temporal continuities with medieval

Kannada performing traditions, and on the other, had its spatial extensions with the theatre traditions of Kannada, Marathi, Telugu, Tamil and Oriya folk performing traditions. Not only were the new plays adopted with innovations in stagecraft and script, but also a large and greatly committed audience backed them. The new theatre that emerged during the later part of the Nineteenth century enriched itself not only from the theatre traditions of Sanskrit, medieval Kannada and other regional languages, but also from western traditions, primarily through Parsi theatre and subsequently from exposure to English plays. It is appropriate to identify this phase as an interface, rather than as a binary opposition like traditional-modern, east-west etc. as is currently done. In fact, we can identify similar clearly identifiable interfaces for other genres in Indian languages, especially fiction and poetry. Early Shakespearian translations need to be understood as cultural productions of this interface and as an outcome of theatre-centred activity rather than as academic literature-centred translations.

It is pertinent to ask here what the impact of these early Shakespearian translations, with their so-called objectionable deviations, was on the community that flocked to theatres to see them performed. It is quite possible that they served as conduits of the new ideas and modernism, not to mention the imperialistic ideology of the British masters. There is no doubt about the need for research in the reception these translations enjoyed, however scanty the evidence may yet be. But it could also be the other way round. We know that in the Bakhtinian paradigm, any act of parodying, inverting, tilting and mutilating representations provides fertile grounds for acts of contestation, interrogation and subversion. If performances of Khandekar's Marathi play

*kīchak-vadhā* could become an anti-colonial act during the days of Swadeshi movement, then the contestation and subversive potential of performing traditions cannot be belittled. In fact, during the period 1908-18, Shanta Kavi, an activist of the Swadeshi and Kannada unification movement, used to ride a buffalo from village to village to perform the play *vidyāranya-vijaya* in the *kīrtana* form. Though the plot and dialogue of the play were written against the backdrop of the history of the Vijayanagara empire, in its performance it is said to have become a play reflecting the sentiments of the nationalist and Karnataka unification movement. How a culture re-inscribes and reads a text is an important factor that needs to be considered in understanding translations. In an article in the volume *śēkspiarige-namaskāra*, Sriranga (Sriranga 1966) brings to our notice that his Sanskrit professor used to refer to Kalidasa as 'the Shakespeare of Hindustan'. The colonial context and the power relationship forged between the two authors are obvious. Balurao, the volume editor, provides a sketch done by R S Naidu, a renowned artist from the Jaganmohana School of Arts, Mysore. A close reading of the following sketch helps us to appreciate its significance.(see p.30)

Kalidasa and Shakespeare are represented as being friendly, standing hand in hand and dressed appropriately, their attires suiting the worlds they represent. While Kalidasa has a palm-leaf manuscript in his hand, Shakespeare has a scroll. Everything looks like a perfect demonstration of a harmonious East-West encounter.

*But wait a minute!*

*Did someone feel uncomfortable that Shakespeare is slightly taller than Kalidasa?*

*Or that Shakespeare looks like a 'manly Englishman'!*

*And that Kalidasa looks a BIT 'effeminate'!*

*Also there is no doresāni anywhere around (for our comfort)!*

*It doesn't matter; Kalidasa is represented on the right side and Shakespeare to his left.*

We all know that in the Indian iconographic tradition, *vāma* (left) conventionally suggests inferiority and insignificance with reference to its right counterpart. Like Naidu's sketch, many of these early Shakespearian translations were probably doing something of this sort, wittingly or unwittingly. Only viewers and audience can decide what to read from a representation.





*Kalidasa and Shakespeare*  
(Sketch by R.S. Naidu, reproduced from Balurao 1966).

## Notes

1. An earlier version of this paper was presented at the National Seminar on *Postcolonial Translation* held at the Indian Institute of Technology, Kharagpur during March 28-30, 2003. However, the initiative to work on this topic began with my remarks as the Chairperson of a session on Shakespeare in Kannada at the National Seminar on Shakespeare in India held at the Department of English, University of Delhi during March 1988. I acknowledge Professor Harish Trivedi and Dr. Anjali Gera Roy for providing me an opportunity to undertake a study on the theme. I would also like to acknowledge the suggestions and comments made by an anonymous reviewer of this journal, most of which have been incorporated. Special thanks for Ms. Nazir Lasker for her help in preparing the final draft of the paper.
2. For a detailed discussion of counter-construction dynamics of 'the manly Englishman, effeminate Indian and the infidel mem sahib', see Satyanath 1997.
3. The fact that the name of one of the most popular actors of early twentieth century was Mahamaad Peer also needs to be kept in mind.
4. It is generally believed that B. Venkaracharya's *bhrāntivilāsa*, a translation of *The Comedy of Errors* done in 1876 (based on a Bengali translation by Ishwara Chandra Vidyasagar), was the earliest translation of Shakespeare in Kannada. However, Deva (Deva 1994) has recently pointed out that Chennabasappa's translation

is actually the earliest. A translation of *As You Like It* with the title *sankalpa siddhiyu* in the yakṣagāna style also appeared in 1871.

5. This translation is based on the Telugu title *sumitrā - caritram*. It is interesting to point out that the Telugu concept of *caritram* has not been incorporated in the Kannada translation.
6. Criticism of professional theatre came also from another quarters, viz. the amateur groups, and some criticisms were in the form of plays. T.P. Kailasam and Adyarangacharya (Sriranga), having their exposure to theatre through the west, wrote plays like *namkampni*, 'our company' and *nāṭakavemba-nāṭaka*, 'a drama called drama', in which they ridiculed what they thought was absurd in the professional theatre of those at times.
7. Such justifications could be seen in the case of other genres as well, like the novel. Padikkal (Padikkal 2002:56-57) provides an instance of such a justification from the preface of *śṛṅgāra cāturyōllāsini*, a romance written by Gubbi Murigaradhya in 1896. Murigaradhya uses the locution *Hindu maryāde* 'Hindu mannerisms' to express the concept of cultural appropriateness.
8. The very fact that Anna Saheb Kirloskar hailed from Gurlahosur in Dharwar district of north Karnataka and that he was exposed to the folk performing traditions of the region makes the point clear for us. Kurtukoti (1993) notes that even the instructions in the Marathi text of *sangīta saubhadra* (1882) clearly mentions the popular tunes of the Kannada folk play *śrīkr̥ṣṇa-pārijāta*.

Accordingly, the text mentions that the famous tune of the song 'pāṇḍu nṛpati janaka jaya' is based on the Kannada folk play tune 'kṣīra sāgara namma mane'. Kurtukoti further points out that after thirty years the dominance of Marathi plays was so profound that the link between the two was completely forgotten.

9. It is important to note that Shanta Kavi was associated with the Sri Virnarayana Prasadita Krutapura Nataka Mandali of Gadag, which was in existence during 1877-1895. He also wrote the first play *uṣāharaṇa* that the company performed in 1877. It is also worth mentioning that Betageri Krishnasharma wrote a poem in Kannada to make the Kannadigas aware of the strong dominance of Marathi over Kannada, but actually composed that song basing it on a famous Marathi tune of those days viz. 'rājahamsa māḥja nijalā'. This is only to suggest the complexity of the situation during the early phase of translation.
10. Bellary Raghavacharya was one of the most popular actors and was associated with the Amateur Dramatists Association, Bangalore. He was a multilingual actor and acted in English, Kannada and Telugu plays. His characterization of Shakespearian characters was so famous that Srinivasamurthy (Srinivasamurthy 1966) notes that Raghavacharya even went abroad in 1927 to Singapore and London and performed before English audiences.
11. Kīrtane is a popular form of religious discourse in which a story is narrated through songs and dialogues to the accompaniment of musical instruments. The mass appeal



that the religious discourse had in those days, the existence of the text only in its oral form, the fluid nature of the text and its potential for spontaneous interpolations, improvisations and changes, and above all, the insularity that such texts enjoyed from the British law (against seditious writings), all suggest the innovative ways in which apparently conservative performing traditions could transform the performances into subversions and contestations.

# APPENDIX-I: TABLE SHOWING THE DETAILS OF SHAKESPEARIAN TRANSLATIONS IN KANNADA

ORIGINAL TITLE	TRANSLATED TITLE	YEAR	TRANSLATOR	LANG.	GENRE	REMARKS
Othello	rāghavēndrarāv nāṭaka	1885	Churamuri	English		
Othello	śūrasēna caritre	1895	Basavappa shastry	English		Oral rendering's tr.
Othello	padmini	1911	Srikantha shastry	Telugu	Prose tr.	V.Pantulu's tr.
Othello	athellō	n.d.	Krishnashastry	English		
Othello	athellō	c.1954	Shanmukhayya	English		
Othello	othelō	1963	Huyilagoja	English	Prose tr.	
Othello	othelō	1967	n.a.	English	Prose tr.	Tr. for Children
Othello	athelō	1974	Nisar Ahmad	English		
As You Like It	sankalpa siddhiyu	1871	KKR	English	yakṣagāṇa	
As You Like It	āys yu laik iṭ	n.d.	Shastry	English		
As You Like It	kamalāvatī parinaya	n.d.	Shamaraya	English		
As You Like It	doremagaḷu	1959	Bharatisuta	English	Prose tr.	
As You Like It	nīvu bayasidante	1963	Huyilagoja	English	Prose tr.	
All's Well that Ends Well	satīmaṇi vijaya	1897	Somanathayya	Telugu	Prose tr.	V.Pantulu's tr.
Antony and Cleopatra	āṇṭonī mattu kliyōpātra	n.d.	Mallaraje Arasu	English		unpublished
The Comedy of Errors	nagadavarannu nagisuva kathe	1871	Chennabasappa	English		earliest tr.
The Comedy of Errors	bhrāntivilāsa	1876	Venkatacharya	Bengali	Prose tr.	I.Vidyasagar's tr.
The Comedy of Errors	viparyāsa	1947	Parvatavani	English		
King Henry VI	jāk kēḍ dombi dāndhaleya prahasana	1959	Gundappa	English	II Part only	
King Lear	hēmacandrārāja vilāsa	1899	Puttanna	English	Verse + prose	1989?
King Lear	liyar mahārāja	1959	Srinavasa	English		
King Lear	king liyara	1963	Huyilagoja	English	Prose tr.	

King Lear	king-liyar	1988	Shivaprakasha	English		
Julius Ceaser	jūliyas sīzar	1931	Sharma, T.T.	English	Prose tr.	
Julius Ceaser	śavasamskāra	1939	Channabasava	English	III Act, II Scene	
Julius Ceaser	jūliyas sīzar	n.d.	Inamdar	English		
Julius Ceaser	jūliyas sīzar	n.d.	Shanmukhayya	English		
Julius Ceaser	jūliyas sījhar	1963	Huyilagoja	English	Prose tr.	
Julius Ceaser	jūliyas sīzar	1973	Shankar	English		
Julius Ceaser	jūliyas sīzar	1975	Bhagavan	English		
Julius Ceaser	jūliyas sīzar	1977	Niranjana	English		
The Two Gentlemen of Verona	kusumākara	1897	Annajirao	English	Prose tr.	1905?
The Tempest	chandamāruta	1893	Subbarao	English	Prose tr.	C.Lamb's tr.
The Tempest	birugāli	1930	Kuvempu	English		Free tr.
The Tempest	chandamāruta	1959	Srinivasa	English		
The Tempest	māntrikana-magalu	1963	Mahalinga Bhatta	English		
The Tempest	birugāli	1963	Huyilagoja	English	Prose tr.	
The Tempest	birugāli	1967	Vi Vi	English	Prose tr.	Tr. For Children
The Tempest	chandamāruta	1981	Murthy Rao	English		
The Tempest	dhūm dhūm sunṭaragāli	1992	Vaidehi	English		
The Taming of the Shrew	n.t.	1881	Varadachar	English		
The Taming of the Shrew	gayyāliyanu sādhumāḍuvike	n.d.	Narasimhachar	English		
The Taming of the Shrew	chandīmardana	n.d.	Ramashastry	English		
The Taming of the Shrew	gayyāliyanu sādhumāḍuvike	1897	Somanathayya	Telugu	Prose tr.	V.Pantulu's tr.
The Taming of the Shrew	chandīmadamardana nāṭakam	1910	Lakshmana Rao	English		

The Taming of the Shrew	trāṭikā nāṭaka	1929	Honnapura matha	Marathi	Prose tr.	V.B.Kelkar's tr.
The Taming of the Shrew	bahaddūr gaṇḍa	1947	Parvatavani	English		
The Taming of the Shrew	gayyāli gaṇḍa	1964	Murthy	English		
Twelfth Night	dvādaśa rātri	1960	Srinivasa	English		
Twelfth Night	hannerāṇeya rātri	1975	Narayana	English		
The Merchant of Venice	pāncālī pariṇayam	1890	Anandaraao	English	A Mysorian	For Palace Co.
The Merchant of Venice	venisu nagarada vaṇika	1906	Venkatacharya	Bengali?		
The Merchant of Venice	vēṇupuriya vartaka	1928	Hanumanta Gowda	English		
The Merchant of Venice	suratanagarada śrēṣṭhiyu	1929	Vasudevacharya	English		
The Merchant of Venice	venis vyāpāri	1958	Sukuma	English		
The Merchant of Venice	venissina vyāpāri	1959	Gundanna	English	Blank verse	
The Merchant of Venice	venisina vartaka	1962	Huyilagoḷa	English	Prose tr.	
The Merchant of Venice	marcanṭ af venis	n.d.	Jayarajacharya	English		
The Merchant of Venice	di marcanṭ af venis	n.d.	Sitaramayya	English		
The Merchant of Venice	di marcanṭ af venis	n.d.	Shanmukhayya	English		
A Midsummer-night's Dream	pramīlārjunīya	c. 1890	Srikanthesha Gowda	English		



A Midsummer- night's Dream	vasantayāminī swapanacamatkāra nāṭakavu	c. 1890	Vasudevacharya	English		
A Midsummer- night's Dream	naḍubēśageya irujaganasu	1963	Huyilagoḷa	English	Prose tr.	
A Midsummer- night's Dream	e miḍ sammar naiṭṣ drīm	1974	Nisar Ahmad	English		
Macbeth	myākḇet	c. 1881	Channabasappa	English		
Macbeth	praṭāparudra dēva	1895	Srikanthesha Gowda	English		
Macbeth	dvēśa bhāṇḍāra nāṭakavu	1926	Anantaraya	English	Dukha- janya	
Macbeth	raktākṣi	1932	Kuvempu	English		Free tr.
Macbeth	myākḇet	1936	Gundappa	English		1974?
Macbeth	myākḇeth	1963	Huyilagoḷa	English	Prose tr.	krūra-hambala (1964)
Macbeth	myākḇet	1976	Ramachandra deva	English		
Macbeth	myākḇet	1985	Parvatavani	English		
Macbeth	māranāyakana drṣṭānta	1990	Shivaprakash	English		
Macbeth	gombe myākḇet	1992	Vaidehi	English		
Romeo and Juliet	kamalākṣa padmagandhiyara kathe	1881	Bhandivada	English		
Romeo and Juliet	rāmavarma līlāvati	c.1889	Varadachar	English		
Romeo and Juliet	rāmavarma līlāvati caritre	1889	Anandarao	English		
Romeo and Juliet	rāmavarma līlāvati caritre	1889	Jayarajacharya	English		
Romeo and Juliet	rōmiyō and jūliyeṭ	n.d.	Basavappa shastry	English		Oral rendering's tr.
Romeo and Juliet	rōmiyō and, jūliyeṭ	n.d.	Srikanthesha Gowda	English		
Romeo and Juliet	asūyā parināma	1931	Amrutachari	English		
Romeo and Juliet	rōmiyō mattu jūliyeṭ	1949	Shankara narayanaRao	English	Prose tr.	
Romeo and Juliet	rōmiyō jūliyeṭ	1952	Shanmukhayya	English		

Romeo and Juliet	rōmiyō mattu jūliyet	1963	Huyilagola	English	Prose tr.	
The Winter's Tale	manjughōṣa	n.d.	Rangacharya	English		
The Winter's Tale	mahīmaṇḍana	1900	Annajirao	English	Prose tr.	
The Winter's Tale	manjuvāṇi	1914	Srikantha shastry	Telugu	Prose tr.?	V.Pantulu's tr.
The Winter's Tale	hēmanta	1982	Shivarama Karantha	English		
Cymbeline	jayasimharāja charitram	1907	Nanjappa	English		
Cymbeline	jayasimharāja caritre	1881	Puttanna	English	Prose tr.	
Hamlet	hyāmlet	1905	Anandaraao	English		
Hamlet	hyāmlet, ā nāṭakada karnāṭaka bhāṣāntaram	1905	Rao	English		
Hamlet	hyāmlet	c. 1930	Shivarama Karantha	English		Unpublis-hed
Hamlet	santāpaka	1937	Amrutachari	English	Prose tr.	
Hamlet	hyāmlet	n.d.	Kulakarni	English		
Hamlet	hyāmlet	n.d.	Jayarajacharya	English		
Hamlet	hyāmlet	n.d.	Jivannaraya	English		
Hamlet	hyāmlet	n.d.	Shivalinga swamy	English		
Hamlet	hyāmlet	n.d.	Hemantakumara	English		
Hamlet	hyāmlet	n.d.	Jivaji	English		Unpublis-hed
Hamlet	hyāmlet	n.d.	Savaligimatha	English		Unpublis-hed
Hamlet	hyāmlet	1958	Srinivasa	English		
Hamlet	hyāmlet	1960	Parvati	English		
Hamlet	hyāmlet	1961	Kulakarni	English	Prose tr.	
Hamlet	hyāmlet	1970	Anandaraao	English		
Hamlet	hyāmlet	1973	Bhagawan	English		
Hamlet	hyāmlet	1978	Ramachandra deva	English		
Hamlet	hyāmlet	1985	Parvatavani	English		
Coriolanus	koriyalēnas	1981	Rajagopal	English		
Pericles	parikālābhya daya	1897	Annajirao	English	Prose tr.	

## APPENDIX – II

### A BIBLIOGRAPHY OF SHAKESPEARIAN TRANSLATIONS IN KANNADA

#### *Othello*

Krishnashastry, A.R. n.d. *athellō*.<sup>i</sup> n.p.

Churamuri, G.K. 1885. *rāghavēndrarāv nāṭaka*. Dharwar: G.K. Churamuri.

Basavappashastry M. and C. Subbarao. 1895. *śūrasēna caritre*.<sup>ii</sup> Mysore: G.T.A. Press.

Srikanthashastry, Nam. 1911. *padmini*.<sup>iii</sup> Mysore: G.T.A. Press.

Shanmukhayya, Y.M. 1954. *athellō*.<sup>iv</sup> n.p.

Huyilagola, Varadaraja. 1963. *othelō*.<sup>v</sup> Dharwar: Ramashraya Book Depot.

n.a. 1967. *othelō*.<sup>vi</sup> Mysore: Sharada Mandira.

Ahmad, Nisar. 1974. *athelō*. Mysore: Thalukina Venkannayya Smaraka Granthamale.

### *As You Like It*

K. K. R. 1871. sankalpa siddhiu.<sup>vii</sup> *subōdhinī*, Nov. 1<sup>st</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> issues.

Shastry, A.V. n.d. *āys yu laik it*.<sup>viii</sup> n.p.

Shamaraya, Venkatadri. n.d. *kamalāvatī parīṇaya*.<sup>ix</sup> n.p.

Bharatisuta. 1959. *doremagaḷu*.<sup>x</sup> Mangalore: Kannada Prapancha Prakashana.

Huyilagola, Varadaraja. 1963. *nīvu bayasidante*.<sup>xi</sup> Dharwar: Ramashraya Book Depot.

### *All's Well that Ends Well*

Somanathayya, Bellave Somappa. 1897. *satīmaṇi vijaya*.<sup>xii</sup> n.p

### *Antony and Cleopatra*

Arasu, K. Mallaraje. n.d. *āṇṭoni mattu kliyōpātra*. Unpublished.

### *The Comedy of Errors*

Chennabasappa, Basavalingappa. 1871. *nagadavarannu nagisuva kathe*.<sup>xiii</sup> Dharwar: n.p.



Venkatacharya, B. 1876. *bhrāntivilāsa*.<sup>xiv</sup> Mysore: G.T.A. Press.

Parvatavani. 1947. *viparyāsa*. Bangalore: Chaya Prakatanaalaya.

### ***King Henry VI***

Gundappa, D.V. (Di.Vi.G.) 1959. *jāk kēḍ dombi dāndhaleya prahasana*.<sup>xv</sup> Mysore: Kavyalaya.

### ***King Lear***

Puttanna, M.S. 1899. *hēmacandrarāja vilāsa*.<sup>xvi</sup> Bangalore: Coxton Press.

Srinivasa. 1959. *liyar mahārāja*. Bangalore: Jivana Karyalaya.

Huyilagola, Varadaraja. 1963. *king 'liyara*.<sup>xvii</sup> Dharwar: Ramashraya Book Depot.

Shivaprakasha, H.S. 1988. *king liyar*. Bangalore: Priyadarshini Pustakalaya.

### ***Julius Caesar***

Inamdar, V.M. n.d. *jūliyas sīzar*.<sup>xviii</sup> n.p.

Shanmukhayya, Y.M. n.d. *jūliyas sīzar*.<sup>xix</sup> n.p.

Sharma, Tirumale Tatacharya. 1921. *jūliyas sīzar*.<sup>xx</sup> Mangalore: Dashaprabhu and Sons.

Chennabasava. 1939. *śavasamskāra*.<sup>xxi</sup> Bellary: Kannada Geleyara Gumpu.

Huyilagola, Varadaraja. 1963. *jūliyas sījhar*.<sup>xxii</sup> Dharwar: Ramashraya Book Depot.

Shankar, S.N. 1973. *jūliyas sīzar*. Mysore: Sharada Mandira.

Bhagavan, K.S. 1975. *jūliyas sīzar*. Mysore: Mahima Prakashana.

Niranjana, Tejasvini. 1977. *jūliyas sīzar*. Bangalore: Katha Sahitya.

### *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*

Annajirao, M.R. 1897. *kusumākara*.<sup>xxiii</sup> Bangalore: Town Press.

### *The Tempest*

Subbarao, B. 1892. *caṇḍamāruta- śēkspiya mahākaviyinda racitavāda ṭempeṣṭ emba nāṭakada katheya sārāṃśavu*.<sup>xxiv</sup> Mysore: G.T.A. Press.

Kuvempu. 1930. *birugāḷi*.<sup>xxv</sup> Mysore: Udayaravi.

Srinivasa. 1959. *caṇḍamāruta*. Bangalore: Jivana Karyalaya.

Huyilagola, Varadaraja. 1963. *birugāḷi*.<sup>xxvi</sup> Dharwar: Ramashraya Book Depot.

Mahalingabhatta, Y. 1963. *māntrikana-magaḷu*. Mangalore: U.R. Shenoy and Sons.

Vi.Vi. 1967. *birugāḷi*.<sup>xxvii</sup> Mysore: Sharada Mandira.

Murthyrao, A.N. 1981. *caṇḍamāruta*. Mysore: Arpana Prakashana.

Vaidehi. 1992. *dhūm dhūm sunṭaragāḷi*. Heggodu: Akshara Prakashana.

### ***The Taming of the Shrew***

Varadachar, A. n.d. n.t. n.p.

Ramashastry, Godapalli. n.d. *caṇḍīmardana*.<sup>xxviii</sup> n.p.

Narasimhachar, S.G. n.d. *gayyāḷiyanṇu sādhumāḍuvike*.<sup>xxix</sup> n.p.

Somanathayya, Bellave Somappa. 1897. *gayyāḷiyanṇu sādhumāḍuvike*.<sup>xxx</sup> n.p.

Lakshmanarao, K. 1910. *caṇḍīmadamardana nāṭakam*. Mysore: G.T.A. Press.

Honnapuramatha, Ga. Hu. 1929. *trāṭikā nāṭaka athavā monḍa gaṇḍa tunṭa henḍati nāṭaka*.<sup>xxxi</sup> Dharwar: R.A. Hirematha.

Parvatavani. 1947. *bahaddūr gaṇḍa*. Mysore: Bharati Prakashana.

Murthy, A.S. 1964. *gayyāḷi gaṇḍa*. Tiptur: Sudarshana Prakashana.

### *Twelfth Night*

Srinivasa. 1960. *dvādaśa-rātri*. Bangalore: Jivana Karyalaya.

Narayana, P.V. 1975. *hanneradaneya rātri*. Bangalore: Ullasa Prakanatalaya.

### *The Merchant of Venice*

Sitaramayya, V. n.d. *di marcent af venis*.<sup>xxxii</sup> n.p.

Shanmukhayya, Y.M. n.d. *di marcent af venis*.<sup>xxxiii</sup> n.p.

Jayarajacharya, Narahari. n.d. *marcent af venis*.<sup>xxxiv</sup> n.p.

Krishnashastry, A.R. n.d. *venisu nagarada vaṇika*.<sup>xxxv</sup> n.p.

Ananadarao, A. 1890. *pancālī pariṇayam*.<sup>xxxvi</sup> Bangalore: Albion Press.

Venkātacharya, B. 1906. *venisu nagarada vaṇika*.<sup>xxxvii</sup> n.p.

Hanumantagowda, C. 1928. *vēṇupuriya vartaka*, ed. by Bhi. Ji. Hulikavi. Dharwar: Sharada mandira.

Vasudevacharya, Kerura. 1929. *suratanagarada śrēṣṭhiyu*. Bagilukote: Vasudeva Pustakalaya.

Sukuma. 1958. *venis vyāpāri*. Bangalore: Panchajanya.



Gundanna, G. 1959. *venissina vyāpāri*. Citradurga: G. Gundanna.

Huyilagola, Varadaraja. 1962. *venisina vartaka*.<sup>xxxviii</sup> Dharwar: Ramashraya Book Depot.

### *A Midsummer Night's Dream*

Vasudevacharya, Kerura. n.d. *vasantayāminī swapanacamatkāra nāṭakavu*.<sup>xxxix</sup>  
Bagilukote: Kerura Swamirayacharya.

Srikantheshagowda, M.L. 1890 (?). *pramīlārjunīya*. Mysore: G.T.A. Press.

Huyilagola, Varadaraja. 1963. *naḍubēsageya iruḷuganasu*.<sup>xi</sup> Dharwar: Ramashraya Book Depot.

Ahmad, Nisar. 1974. *e miḍ sammar naiṭs drīm*. Mysore: Pruthvi Prakashana.

### *Macbeth*

Chennabasappa, Basavalingappa. 1881 (?). *myākbet*.<sup>xli</sup> Dharwar: n.p.

Srikantheshagowda, M.L. 1895. *pratāparudradēva*.<sup>xlii</sup> Mysore: G.T.A. Press.

Anantharaya, Haranahalli. 1926. *dvēśa bhāṇḍāra nāṭakavu*.<sup>xliii</sup>  
Karwar: Haranahalli Anantharaya.

Kuvempu. 1932. *raktākṣi*.<sup>xliv</sup> Mysore: Udayaravi.

Gundappa, D.V. (Di.Vi.G). 1936. *myākbet*.<sup>xlv</sup> Bangalore:  
Karnataka Prakanalaya.

Huyilagola, Varadaraja. 1963. *myākbet*.<sup>xlvi</sup> Dharwar:  
Ramashraya Book Depot.

Deva, Ramachandra. 1976. *myākbet*. Chokkadi: Sumanasa  
Vichara Vedike.

Parvatavani. 1985. *myākbet*. Bangalore: IBH Publishers.

Shivaprakasha, H.S. 1990. *māranāyakana dr̥ṣṭānta*. Shimoga:  
Parisara Prakashana.

Vaidehi. 1992. *gombe myākbet*. Heggodu: Akshara  
Prakashana.

### ***Romeo and Juliet***

Basavappashastry, M. n.d. *rōmiyō and jūliyet*.<sup>xlvii</sup> n.p.

Srikantheshagowda. K.L. n.d. *rōmiyō and jūliyet*.<sup>xlviii</sup> n.p.

Bhandivada, Venkatesha Bhimarao. 1881. *kamalākṣa  
padmagandhiyara kathe*. n.p.

Anandarao, A. 1889. *rāmavarma līlāvati caritre*. Mysore: Government Branch Press.

Jayarajacharya, Narahari. 1889. *rāmavarma līlāvati caritre*. Mysore: n.p.

Varadachar, A.V. 1889. *rāmavarma līlāvati*. Mysore: General Agency.

Amrutachari, Ti. 1931. *asūyā pariṇāma*. Mysore: Wesleyan Mission Publishing House.

Shankaranarayanarao, H.M. 1949. *rōmiyō mattu jūliyeṭ*.<sup>xlix</sup> Mysore: Sharada Mandira.

Shanmukhayya, Y.M. 1952. *rōmiyō jūliyeṭ*.<sup>i</sup> Bangalore: Eastern Press.

Huyilagola, Varadaraja. 1963. *rōmiyō mattu jūliyeṭ*.<sup>ii</sup> Dharwar: Ramashraya Book Depot.

### *The Winter's Tale*

Rangacharya, Mudgal. n.d. *manjughōṣa*.<sup>lii</sup> n.p.

Annajirao, M.R. 1900. *mahīmandāna*.<sup>liii</sup> Mysore: G.T.A. Press.

Srikanthashastry, Nam. 1914. *manjuvāṇi*.<sup>liv</sup> Mysore: G.T.A. Press.

Karanta, Shivarama. 1982. *hēmanta*. Hubballi: Sahitya bandhara.

### *Cymbeline*

Puttana, M.S. and M.B. Srinivasa Iyengar. 1881. *jayasimharāja caritre*.<sup>lv</sup> Bangalore: City Press.

Nanjappa, Mallappa. 1907. *jayasimharāja caritram*.<sup>lvi</sup> Bangalore: Town Press.

### *Hamlet*

Karantha, Shivarama. n.d. *hyāmleṭ*.<sup>lvii</sup> Unpublished.

Jayarajacharya, Narahari. n.d. *hyāmleṭ*.<sup>lviii</sup> n.p.

Jevannaraya, Gode. n.d. *hyāmleṭ*.<sup>lix</sup> n.p.

Savaligimatha, Shivalingaswamy. n.d. *hyāmleṭ*.<sup>lx</sup> n.p.

Hemantakumara. n.d. *hyāmleṭ*.<sup>lxi</sup> n.p.

Ananadarao, A. (Mysuru Deshiyya). 1905. *hyāmleṭ ā nāṭakada karnāṭaka bhāṣāntaram*.<sup>lxii</sup> Bangalore: Mysore Book Depot Press.

Amrutachari, T. 1937. *santāpaka*.<sup>lxiii</sup> Bangalore: M. Nanjundaya and Brothers.

Shanmukhayya, Y.M. 1954. *hyāmleṭ*.<sup>lxiv</sup> n.p.



Srinivasa. 1958. *hyāmleṭ*. Bangalore: Jivana Karyalaya.

Narasimhamurthy, Parvathi Krishnappa. 1960. *hyāmleṭ*. Mysore: Purnima Sahitya Mandira.

Kulakarni, K.S. 1961. *hyāmleṭ*.<sup>lxv</sup> Belagam: Sarasvati Pustaka Bhandara.

Bhagavan, K.S. 1973. *hyāmleṭ*. Mysore: Thalukina Venkannayya Smaraka Granthamale.

Deva, Ramachandra. 1978. *hyāmleṭ*. Sagara: Akshara Prakashana.

Parvatavani. 1985. *hyāmleṭ*. Bangalore: IBH Publishers.

### *Coriolanus*

Rajagopal. K.V. 1981. *koriyolēnas*. Bangalore: Jagat Sahitya Male.

### *Pericles*

Annajirao, M.R. 1897. *parikalābhyudaya*.<sup>lxvi</sup> Mysore: G.T.A. Press.

### *Anthologies*

Narasimhashastry, V.L. 1909. *śēkspiya mahākaviya nāṭaka kathānūvāda*.<sup>lxvii</sup> Mysore: Christian Literature Society.

Shastry, V. Lakshminrusimha. 1934. *śēkspiya nāṭaka kathegaḷu*.<sup>lxviii</sup> Bangalore: Karnataka Prakatanaḷaya.

Srikanthashastry, Nam. 1953. *kavinandana kathegaḷu*.<sup>lxix</sup>  
Bangalore: M.S. and Sons.

Shastry, Bellave Narahari. 1955. *āṅgla nāṭaka kathāvaḷi*.<sup>lxx</sup>  
Bangalore: Bellave Pustakalaya.

Girvani. 1957. *othellō mattu itara nāṭaka kathegaḷu*.<sup>lxxi</sup>  
Bangalore: Ashoka Sahitya.

Iyengar, Masti venkatesha. 1958. *śēkspiyaṛ bhāṣāntara - sampuṭa I: liyaṛ mahārāja mattu hyāmleṭ*. Bangalore: Jivana Karyalaya.

Iyengar, Masti venkatesha. 1959. *śēkspiyaṛ bhāṣāntara - sampuṭa II: dvādaśa rātri mattu caṇḍamāruta*. Bangalore: Jivana Karyalaya.

Venkataramappa, K. 1959. *ingliś nāṭakada kathegaḷu - bhāga I*.<sup>lxxii</sup> Mysore: K. Venkataramappa.

Kulakarni, A.S. 1961. *venis nagarada vartaka mattu itara kathegaḷu*.<sup>lxxiii</sup> Bangalore: S.S.N. Depot.

Srinivasa. 1962. *śēkspiyaṛ-dr̥syagaḷu*.<sup>lxxiv</sup> Bangalore: Jivana Karyalaya.

Ramananda. 1963. *śēkspiyaṛina kathegaḷu*.<sup>lxxv</sup> Dharwar: Samaja Pustakalaya.

## FOOT-NOTES FOR APPENDIX-II

- i. The year of publication and the place and publisher's name are not available.
- ii. Basvappashastry did not know English. The translation has been done based on the Kannada rendering of the play by Subbarao. The translation was commissioned for the Palace Company.
- iii. Prose translation based on the Telugu version by Kandukuri Vireshalingam Pantulu.
- iv. The year of publication is only tentative and the place and publisher's name is not available.
- v. Prose translation.
- vi. The translator's name is not available; however, this translation was meant for the children are evident from the fact that this is the twenty-fifth publication in the children books series (makkaḷa pustakamāle).
- vii. This appears to be the earliest translation though, Deva (1994) claims that Chennabasappa's translation of *The Comedy of Errors* is the earliest one. The exact date of publication for *sankalpa siddhiyu* is available to us: the November 1<sup>st</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> issues of *subōdhiṇī*, a journal that use to get published from Mangalore. What is interesting with this translation of *As You Like It* is that it has been adapted into yakṣagāṇa style, the regional folk theatre of coastal Karnataka (for more details see Padikkal 2001).
- viii. The year of publication and the place and publisher's name are not available.
- ix. The year of publication and the place and publisher's name are not available.
- x. Prose rendering; like a long story (nīlgate).
- xi. Prose translation.
- xii. The place and publisher's name is not available. The translation is based on the Telugu translation by Vireshalingam Pantulu and probably, a prose translation.
- xiii. This is the earliest translation of Shakespeare in Kannada according to deva (1993).

- xiv. A prose translation based on Ishvara Chandra Vidyasagar's Bengali translation. The second edition appeared by 1899. The first edition appeared in 1876 simultaneously from G.T.A. Press in Mysore and Karnataka Press in Bangalore.
- xv. Contains translation of the second part of *Henry VI*.
- xvi. Havanura (1974) observes that compared to the then prevailing trend in translation of using prose and verse (based on the model of Sanskrit plays), Puttanna's prose translation of the play is a new step in the emergence of Kannada drama.
- xvii. Prose translation.
- xviii. The year of publication and the place and publisher's name are not available.
- xix. The year of publication and the place and publisher's name are not available.
- xx. Prose translation. Balurao's bibliography gives the year of publication as 1931 and publisher as Karnataka Sahitya Prakatana Mandira, Bangalore.
- xxi. Translation of the second scene, third act of the play.
- xxii. Prose translation.
- xxiii. Balurao (1966) notes that it is a prose translation.
- xxiv. Prose translation; the third edition of the translation had appeared by 1898. However, Balurao (1966) gives the year of publication as 1893 and the publisher's name as Karnataka Granthamala, Mysore.
- xxv. This is a free translation. A subsequent edition (second?) appeared in 1959. Balurao (1966) gives the publisher's name as Kavyalaya.
- xxvi. Prose translation.
- xxvii. This translation that was meant for the children is evident from the fact that this is the ninth publication in the children books series (makkaḷa pustakamāle).
- xxviii. The date of publication, place and publisher's name are not available.
- xxix. The date of publication, place and publisher's name are not available.



- xxx. The place and publisher's name is not available. The translation is based on the Telugu translation by Vireshalingam Pantulu and probably, a prose translation.
- xxxī. This translation had seen the third edition by 1952. The publisher for the third edition was Chandrodaya Mudranalaya of Dharwar.
- xxxii. The date of publication, place and publisher's name are not available.
- xxxiii. The date of publication, place and publisher's name are not available.
- xxxiv. The date of publication, place and publisher's name are not available.
- xxxv. The date of publication, place and publisher's name are not available.
- xxxvi. The bibliographies mention that the name of the translation is 'a resident of Mysore'. However, it has been pointed out that the translator is actually A. Anandarao.
- xxxvii. The place and publisher's name are not available. Probably, a prose translation based on Ishvara Chandra Vidyasagar's Bengali translation.
- xxxviii. Prose translation.
- xxxix. The date of publication is not available. However, secondary sources mention that it was published around 1890.
  - xl. Prose translation.
  - xli. The date of publication has been confirmed only from the secondary sources.
  - xlīi. The title of the play, *pratāparudradēva* is not the name given for Macbeth in the Kannada adaptation. It is the name given to Malcom, the first son of Macbeth, who ascends the throne. If fact, the name given for Macbeth in the adaptation is *vīrasēna*. Similarly the witches have become *yakṣiṇis* in the adaptation.
  - xlīīi. Includes an introductory essay on tragedy; it is interesting to note that the term used for tragedy is 'dukhajanya nāṭaka'.
  - xliv. This is a free translation. A subsequent edition (second?) appeared in 1959.

- xliv. Subsequent edition appeared in 1974 from Mysore and was published by Kavyalaya.
- xlvi. Prose translation. Another prose translation with the title *krūra hambala* has been published from the same translator in 1964 from Nilakantha Prakashana from Dharwar.
- xlvii. The date of publication, place and publisher's name are not available.
- xlviii. The date of publication, place and publisher's name are not available.
- xl ix. Prose translation.
  - 1. The second edition appears to have been published in 1970 from Bangalore by Triveni Mudranalaya.
  - li. Prose translation.
  - lii. The date of publication, place and publisher's name are not available.
  - liii. Prose translation.
  - liv. Prose translation based on Kandukuri Vireshalingam Pantulu's prose translation, *sumitrā caritam* in Telugu.
  - lv. There is a suggestion in Sujata (1981) that this was subsequently rewritten as a play by Puttanna. However, the text is no evidence of its publication.
  - lvi. Some references mention that the publisher's name is T.N. Mudrakshara Shale.
  - lvii. Probably was translated some time around 1930.
  - lviii. The date of publication, place and publisher's name are not available.
  - lix. The date of publication, place and publisher's name are not available.
  - lx. The date of publication, place and publisher's name are not available.
  - lxi. The date of publication, place and publisher's name are not available.
  - lxii. Scholars have pointed out that the translator is probably A. Anandarao.
  - lxiii. Prose translation.
  - lxiv. The place and publisher's name is not available.

- lxv. Prose translation.
- lxvi. Prose translation.
- lxvii. Includes prose translation of eight plays: *King Lear*, *As You Like It*, *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, *Cymbeline*, *Twelfth Night*, *The Winter's Tale*, *The Tempest* and *All's Well That Ends well*.
- lxviii. Translated from English and contains prose renderings of four plays: *Hamlet*, *Macbeth*, *Othello* and *Julius Cesar*.
- lix. The year of publication given here is for the second edition. This is the prose translation of Kandukuri Vireshalingam Pantulu's prose translation of Shakespeare's plays in Telugu and contains the following: *The Merchant of Venice*, *Othello*, *The Winter's Tale*, *King Lear*, and *The Taming of the Shrew*. Srikanthashastry's prose translations of *Othello* and *The Winter's Tale* have already been published separately in 1911 and 1914.
- lxx. Includes prose translations of comedies.
- lxxi. Includes prose translations of seven plays: *Othello*, *The Merchant of Venice*, *Cymbeline*, *Pericles*, *As You Like It*, *The Winter's Tale* and *Macbeth*.
- lxxii. Includes prose translation of six plays: *The Tempest*, *Pericles*, *Cymbeline* and others.
- lxxiii. Includes prose translations of four plays: *The merchant of Venice*, *Othello*, *As You Like It* and *Macbeth*.
- lxxiv. This includes translations of scenes from fifteen different plays.
- lxxv. Includes prose translations of seven plays: *The Merchant of Venice*, *As You Like It* and others.

## References

- Amura, G.S. (1995). *uttara karnāṭakadalli ādhunika rangabhūmiya udaya* (vṛutti nāṭaka mattu vilāsi nāṭakagalu) sātvikapatha. Bangalore: Prithvi Prakashana.
- Anderson, Benedict. (1983). **Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism.** London: Verso.
- Balurao, S. (1966). **śēkspiyarige namaskāra.** Delhi: Kannada Bharati.
- Chaudhuri, Sukanta (2002). **Shakespeare in India.**  
<http://web.uvic.ca/shakespeare/Library/Criticism/Shakespearein/India.html>
- Deva, Ramachandra (1993). **śēkspiyar: eraḍu samskr̥tigalalli.** Bangalore: Granthavali.
- Enke (2002). **naṭa nāṭakakāra vāmanarāv māstar.** Dharwar: Sankalana Prakashana.
- Fleet, J.F. (1885). *The Insurrection of Rāyaṇṇa of Sangolli.* **Indian Antiquary.** Vol. XIV:
- Havanura, Srinivasa (1974). **hosagannaḍada aruṇōdaya.** Mysore: University of Mysore.



**kannaḍa granthasūci: mudrita kannaḍa kṛitigaḷa vivaraṇātmaka granthasūci- anuvāda sāhitya.** Vol. 7. Mysore: University of Mysore. 1984.

Karnad, Girish. (1989). *In Search of a New Theatre*, in Sorden, Clara M. (ed) **Contemporary India**. Delhi: Oxford University Press.

Kurtukoti, K.D. (1969). *nāṭaka naḍedubanda dāri*. Dharwar: Manohara Grantha Mala.

Kurtukoti, K.D. (1993). *tēli banda kaṭṭigeya tunḍu. uriya-nālige*. Dharwar: Manohara Grantha Mala.

Murthy Rao, A.N. (1962). *śēkspiyaṛ: pūrvābhaga*. Mysore: University of Mysore.

Murthy Rao, A.N. (1966). *sekspiyaṛ mattu karnataka* in Balurao S. (ed.) *śēkspiyaṛige namaskāra*. New Delhi: Kannada Bharati.

Padikkal, Shivarama (2001). *nāḍu-nuḍiya rūpaka: rāṣṭra, ādhunikate mattu kannaḍada modala kādambarigaḷu*. Mangalagangoṭri: Mangalore University.

Punekar, Shankara Mokashi (1974). *prēkṣaka mattu kalābhīruci. kannaḍa rangabhūmi: anḍu-inḍu, āru upanyāsaḷu*. Dharwar: Karnatak University.

Ramachandramurthy, H.K. (1977). *kannaḍa rangabhūmi. kannada nataka prapaṃca*. Bangalore: Kannada Sahitya Parishattu.

Satyanath, T.S. (2002). **Translation and Reception as a Cultural Process: Translating Tragedies in Kannada**. *Translation Today: Online Journal*, 1.1, Inaugural issue, now available in its print version. [www.cill/anukrti/Tt/1.1](http://www.cill/anukrti/Tt/1.1)

Satyanath, T.S. (1997). **Manly Sahabs and their Infidel Memsahabs**. *Paper presented at the National Seminar on the Image of the Colonizer in Indian Representations*. Delhi: Karnataka Sangha, March 1-3.

Shamaraya, Ta. Su. (1962). *kannaḍa nāṭaka*. Mysore: Gita Book House.

Shamaraya, Ta. Su. (1966). *kannaḍa mattu śēkspiyaṛ* in S. Balurao (ed.) **śēkspiyaṛige namaskāra**. New Delhi: Kannada Bharati.

Sriranga. (1966). *sāmanyara śēkspiyaṛ* in S. Balurao (ed.) **śēkspiyaṛige namaskāra**. New Delhi: Kannada Bharati.

Sujata, H.S. (1981). **M.S. Puṭṭaṇṇa: ondu adhyayana**. Bangalore: IBH Prakashana.

Venkataramanayya, T.V. (1973). *kannaḍa bhāṣā-sāhitya lēkhana sūci*. Bangalore: Bangalore University.

# TRANSLATION AS DISSEMINATION: A NOTE FROM AN ACADEMIC AND TRANSLATOR FROM BENGAL

SWATI GANGULY

***Abstract:** Translation Studies and Postcolonial Studies have emerged as the two most significant areas of cultural studies in recent times. The purpose of this essay is to explore the link between the two, through the practice of translating postcolonial fiction from Bangladesh with special focus on the short stories of Humayun Ahmed, a major contemporary writer of Bangladesh. Most postcolonial theory continues to uphold the dominance/hegemony of English since it is the language in which such studies are conducted both in the West and the erstwhile colonies. However, despite the phenomenon of the Empire writing back a large number of writers from postcolonial nations write not in English but in their own national language. Hence, postcolonial theory in its negotiations with postcolonial literatures is dependent on the availability of English translations of non-English/vernacular fiction. The choice of fiction from Bangladesh was based on the fact that its identity as a postcolonial nation is integrally linked to a language*

*named Bangla or Bengali. Unlike India, Pakistan or Srilanka, which have witnessed the rise of literature in English, Bangladesh has zealously maintained its unique linguistic identity and the narration of this nation has been almost exclusively in Bangla. Hence, it is little wonder that the postcolonial literature from Bangladesh has remained largely ignored by postcolonial critics and is seldom included in the curriculum of Postcolonial Studies. The aim of translating Humayun Ahmed's stories is a small step towards putting the fiction from Bangladesh on the map of postcolonial literatures. For discourses of translation the value of a translated work was often and still is, determined by the extent to which it can read as if it were written in the target language itself. Expectations of fluency imply an effacement of the very process of translation that makes a translated text available. Such invisibility of the translator and the translated work has ideological implications that are often ignored. Translation is not merely an aesthetic and literary activity that involves two languages but is a process embedded in cultural systems. That a translation be read like an original, implies an erasure of the cultural specificities of the source language and establishes the cultural hegemony of the target language. Postcolonial translation is a radical practice that is aware of the politics of translation and is committed to maintaining the nuances of cultural difference and not domesticating the source language/vernacular text.*

The term 'post-colonial translation' has gained currency in contemporary seminars and workshops but there seems to be little consensus among speakers/academics about its meaning and implications. In seminars there are still lengthy discussions of the pressing need to provide English equivalents of culture-



specific ancient Indian/Aryan class terms like *kshatriya* as 'baron' (to provide a mild example) in order to make the Indian epic more *intelligible* and *acceptable* to an Anglo-American readership. Clearly the term 'post-colonial' appended to translation carries little or no significance and it functions as a fashionable and eye-catching garnish to a commonplace dish necessary to ensure its place in the academic carnival banquet. It is with a remembrance of such amazing encounters that I venture to clarify at the outset what I understand by the term 'post-colonial translation'.

I shall attempt to explore the significance of the term 'post-colonial translation' by tracing the links between Post-colonial Studies and Translation Studies especially as they obtain in the academia. I shall begin by examining briefly the current ideological position of post-colonial studies, which upholds the hegemony of the English language and the political/ideological implications that it has for post-colonial regional/vernacular or what has gained currency as *bhasha* literatures. Post-colonial translation, as I understand it, refers both to translations of non-English post-colonial literatures as a sustained and systematic effort of dissemination of these texts as well as to a methodology that draws on current translation theories to evolve a radical practice that can be termed 'post-colonial'.

The second section of my paper is more personal and is concerned with my role as an humble teacher concerned with the future of English Studies and as a practising translator who just has two languages, viz. Bangla and English at her command. My choice of translating creative fiction from Bangladesh was at one level a conscious attempt to effect a

change in my own/our understanding of post-colonial studies as we choose to define it in the narrow confines of the curriculum. It was occasioned by the sheer excitement of reading Humayun Ahmed, a popular fiction writer from Bangladesh whose nuanced satire of the post-colonial condition created an impulsive desire to translate the stories from Bangla into English.

Post-colonial Studies may be regarded as a new entrant in the academic curriculum of Indian Universities staking its claim in the syllabi of English departments only in the 90's. The two factors responsible for its emergence were the development of a powerful body of post-colonial theories and the 80's phenomena of the Empire writing back in the language of its erstwhile masters/colonizers.

These 'new makers of World fiction', as Pico Iyer terms them, are a generation of writers from post-colonial nations, who truly reap the benefits of a globalized economy. Recipients of prestigious literary awards and whooping sums of advance, these writers enjoy a power and prominence in the world literary market unimagined by those who wrote fiction in English in the 30's or 60's. Tracing the contours of this difference is outside the purview of this paper, and I mention the global image of the English language writer from post-colonial nations because it has had serious consequences for the notion of post-colonial literary productions per se. The oft-quoted statement by Salman Rushdie is a case in point.<sup>1</sup> Recently a similar statement made by V.S. Naipul sparked off the Nimrana debate. Indeed so strong and influential has been this rather ridiculous swagger of vanity and ignorance expressed by post-colonial English writer-critics, that we now

have to resort to underlining the obvious; i.e. the post-colonial nations like India also produce significant and powerful Indian regional language literatures, or *bhasha* literatures, as we have come to call them, meaning, 'indigenous regional language literatures of india'. In spite of its hundreds of years of sophisticated and evolved literary tradition, *bhasha* literatures are now orphans in a global market that refuse to grant them legitimacy and recognition. The Empire it seems is writing back with a vengeance and in the process settling a score with its own sibling, the vernacular or *bhasha* literatures that had once regarded it as an imposter and foundling in the heyday of the Empire.

At this point I wish to digress a little to talk about the role of the English language as shaping the literary/intellectual minds in Bengal from the mid 19<sup>th</sup> to mid 20<sup>th</sup> century and the two-way traffic that existed between English and vernacular literatures.

Perhaps the best example of the reversal of fortunes of English language writers of the Empire can be traced through the careers of two English educated elite Bengali young men in the early /mid 19<sup>th</sup> century. Michael Madhusudan Dutt and Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyaya both began their creative writing careers in English that were regarded as 'false starts'. Dutt went on to record thus in his famous sonnet (included now in almost all Bengali school textbook anthologies) in which he lamented his own ignorance and folly in his inability to recognize the rich jewels of Bangla and covet the goods of the English language like a beggar.



Bankim Chandra whose first novel *Rajmohan's Wife* sank without a trace advised young men like Romesh Chandra: "*You will never live by your writing in English...Govind Chandra and Sashi Chandra's English poems will never live, Madusudan's Bengali poetry will live as long as the Bengali language will live.*" But this celebration of the mother tongue as the vehicle of creative writing was by no means an insular or chauvinistic/parochial tendency. Even if we leave aside the genius of Tagore who embraced internationalism as the credo in his writing, philosophy and pedagogical innovations the bourgeois Bengali in the post-independence era had always operated in two worlds, the world of English/Europe and Bangla.

Indeed in the 1840's/50's Bengali intellectuals and writer-critics like Buddadev Bose, Bishnu Dey, Sudhindranath Dutta, Samar Sen were not only formidable scholars of English and European literature, but were prolific translators of English and European works and especially modernist/symbolist poetry into Bangla. This traffic from the west through translation, not only of texts but of critical thinking, played a significant role in setting the trends of post-Tagore Bangla literature. However not only is such creative/critical bilingualism largely on the wane, but also there is an attendant malaise amongst the middle-class educated younger generation of Bengalis who affect a disdain for Bangla literature and language. It is ironic that the parents of Bengali youngsters would encourage them to read the Bangla nonsense verses of Sukumar Ray in translation. This I'm afraid indicated not a recognition of the genius of the translator Sukanta Chudhury, but a social snobbishness, a mind-set that associates only English with 'great literature'.



In the agenda of Post-colonial Studies Bhasha literatures thus have to contend with the sheer power and prominence of post-colonial English literatures on the one hand and the dominance/hegemony of English language as the medium through which such studies are conducted on the other. The blinkered vision of post-colonial literatures can only be corrected, it seems, through dissemination of the post-colonial bhasha literatures in English translation. Indeed one might say that it is the post-colonial predicament of the non-English writer that her/his identity as a post-colonial writer hinges on the critic/readers' accessibility to her/his works in English.

A famous case in point is that of Mahasweta Devi who was translated into English in the early eighties by the prominent Marxist feminist deconstructionist academic Gayatri Chakrabati Spivak. By the seventies Mahasweta Devi was well known as a powerful writer in a section of Bengali readers and also widely known through the translation of her works into other Indian languages. However, her entry into the post-colonial agenda and her canonical status in the curriculum of Post-colonial Studies (she is now a part of the post-colonial canon) was largely the effect of the prestige of her English language translator in the western academia.

Since English is the linguistic register of post-colonialism, English language translation thus determines the visibility of the writer from multilingual ex-colonies to the West and at home. It is at this crucial juncture that post-colonial translation as a radical practice comes into being and

must be distinguished from the indigenous traditions that have existed in India over a long period.

As Meenakshi Mukherjee observes, "Translations have always been a vital part of Indian literary culture even when the word 'translation' or any of its Indian language equivalents - *anuvad*, *tarjuma*, *bhasantar* or *vivartanam* - was not evoked to describe the activity" The important point to note is that such *anuvad*, *tarjuma* or *bhasantar* almost never drew attention to its own status creating a notion of seamless narratives that are a part of an entire body of writing from a culture. However, what was evidently a virtue/plus point in the indigenous tradition can take on an entirely different political/ideological connotation when translations occur in the powered relations that exist between languages such as vernacular and English in a colonial and post-colonial context. I shall return to this shortly in my discussion in which current translation theory has paved the way for a radical revision of translation practice.

Mukherjee also points out that there was a healthy tradition of translation from one vernacular into another by which a reader of Kannada or Marathi could access literature in Bangla or Oriya without the mediation of English. This form of continuous cultural exchange and interaction accounted for making India into a nation that is 'a translation area'. However, this has lamentably declined over the years for the sheer lack of translators who are proficient in another Indian *bhasha* or vernacular apart from her/his mother tongue. It is at this point that one has to look into the role played by the state supported Sahitya Akademis that were set up with the purpose of translating the representative or best works of

regional/vernacular/bhasha literatures into English. In spite of its attempts to foster across cultural exchange with the objective of linking literatures, as Ritu Menon points out, in these noncommercial ventures the quality of translation and production values were secondary. Menon's essay also traces the development in the 60's of private publishing houses, like Jaico, Hind Pocket Books, Sangam Books, Vikas, OUP and Bell Books that took up translation as viable commercial ventures. Even as these houses ceased publication or became sporadic in their attempts in the late 1980's translation received an extra fillip through 3 independent publishing companies namely Kali For Women (1984), Penguin India (1985) and Katha (1988). I am not equipped to go into a discussion of the roles of these and other publishing enterprises as the disseminator of translations. Suffice it to say that as a feminist academic/teacher I find it invigorating that Kali with its avowed aim of dealing exclusively with women's writing created a kind of revolution in feminist/women's studies in India. It paved the way for feminist scholars who have used translation as a tool of recovery and discovery of forgotten and neglected women writers from bhasha literatures. This in turn has opened up new directions for research into women's contribution in history, politics and literature in various disciplines in the universities and centers for culture studies. However, in spite of the spate of translation activities that now mark the publishing enterprise there is little consensus among them about the theoretical underpinnings of such work. Thus it is difficult to trace the emergence of a theory and methodology of translation of these texts, which is indispensable for translation studies and post-colonial studies in the academia. The presence or the lack of translation apparatus such as glossary, a detailed translator's note/preface along with an

indication of the status of the original or publishing houses. However, such inconsistencies and neglect go a long way in perpetuating the short shift that is given to translation in our culture. An awareness of the politics of translation cannot be treated as the special provenance of post-colonial culture critics who have shown how Orientalist translations in colonial Indian served as a tool of hegemonic control. This is where academic institutions/universities can step in to work in tandem with publishing houses taking up translation projects which, using contemporary translation theory, can turn the practice into a radical cultural-political one.

Traditionally the two F's have dominated translation practice. These are Fidelity and Faithfulness to the source language text and its fluency in the target language. Male practitioners and theorists of translation have often expressed their frustration with these twin demands made of translation as a near impossible task equivalent to finding a woman who is faithful and yet beautiful. In this age of gender-sensitivity and the need to be politically correct, such sexist comments perhaps are less likely to be put stridently in print. However, their unstated presence however looms large in translation reviews in the popular print media. I shall choose to discuss the cultural and ideological implications of 'fluency' because publishing houses continue to prioritize this as a marker of a good translation above everything else. For the average reader this seems like a reasonable demand that a good translation is one that reads as if it were produced in the target language itself. However, it's pernicious effect works both on the status of the translator as well as the translated text, whose ideological/cultural-political implications have been discussed extensively by Lawrence Venuti.



*A fluent strategy aims to efface the translator's crucial intervention in the foreign language text: he or she actively rewrites it in a different language to circulate it in a different culture, but this very process results in a self-annihilation, ultimately contributing to the cultural marginality and economic exploitation which translators suffer today. At the same time, a fluent strategy effaces the linguistic and cultural difference of the foreign text: this gets rewritten in the transparent discourse dominating the target language culture.... In this rewriting, a fluent strategy performs the labour of acculturation which domesticated the foreign text making it intelligible even familiar to the target-language reader, providing him or her with the narcissistic experience that extends the dominion of transparency with other ideological discourses over a different culture.*

Venuti's analysis of the politics of 'fluency' and 'transparency' that end up in 'domesticating' a text and perpetuating cultural hegemony, the 'imperialism' of the target language is a theoretical position that can be profitably used to understand the role of translation in the post-colonial context. It is crucial to continually remind ourselves that with the lure of a global market for translated post-colonial texts the temptations of fluency and transparency can be immense. But to do so would be to participate in a cultural-linguistic imperialism that perpetuates the dominance of Anglo-American cultures. As academicians practicing translation we need to rethink our roles in politics and build up a resistance to English language-culture hegemony. Thus practicing

translators need to be aware of the links that exist between the ideological premises of Translation Studies and Post-colonial Studies.

Recent theorists of post-colonialism and translation have pointed out that 'colonialism and translation went hand in hand'. Apart from the translation projects undertaken by Orientalists who often removed all signs of cultural difference, scholars have traced the analogy between a work of translation and a colony. Both are copies of a source or original that implies an immediate devaluation of status and a position of subordination to the original. With post-structuralism and deconstruction radically revising the notion of *original* and questioning the status of authority/authorship recent translation theory has destabilized the relationship of power between the original and the translated text. In this context it is important to consider the radical potentials of the term *uttarupaniveshbad* (Hindi/Bengali for 'post-colonialism'). As Harish Trivedi has pointed out, the term contains within it the notion of an active dialogue (the Sanskrit prefix *uttar* means both 'after' as well as 'answer and opposition to') with colonialism and its legacies.

Translating post-colonialists aim at providing such an answer and opposition to colonialism through a translation practice that is committed to maintaining the nuances and markers of cultural/linguistic difference of the translated works. This is in Venuti's words, 'foreignize', meaning a text bringing home the point so crucial to post-colonial studies that we are encountering a cultural 'other' and not attempt to efface it or render it invisible. As practicing translators we have to be conscious of the dangers of domesticating the vernacular text and resist a form of fluency that would convey the impression

that it was written in English. The greatest stumbling block on the path of such radical practice is to run the risk of the critical common place of one's work being termed 'a bad translation' which invariably translates as 'it does not read like an English text'. I am of course not attempting to make a plea for or to uphold works of translation that are carelessly executed and are grammatically and syntactically sloppy or uneven. The crucial point is that we need to revise and monitor the kinds of expectation that we bring to a post-colonial translated text, which through years of our experience as the colonized we have internalized as 'natural' and legitimate. Perhaps a more fruitful way would be to recognize that a translated work can neither occupy the position of an original in the target language nor can it wholly be an unchanged version of the original. Rather it is a hybrid product that occupies a third space, a place of in-betweenness.<sup>15</sup>

I now venture into the second section of my paper. About two years ago I found myself as a member of a committee set up to draft a new syllabus for our undergraduate and postgraduate English courses. For most of us in the department this meant a registering in the syllabus of the tug of the discipline of English towards culture studies. We wanted this change to be made at the postgraduate level by an inclusion of a compulsory paper called "Post-colonial Studies". This was to be divided into two sections. The first would attempt to familiarize the student with post-colonial theories and the second section would be a selection of post-colonial texts, primarily fiction. We wanted to resist the tendency to identify post-colonial fiction solely as the preserve of English language texts and wanted to include translated texts as examples of post-colonial writing. It was only then that we

realized the non-availability in English translation of some of the Bengali texts that many of us would have liked to include. To give an example, Bibhutibhusan Bandopadhyaya's novels *Aranyak* and *Chander Pahar* (these titles would translate as *Of the Forest* and *The Mountain of Moon* respectively) we felt were interesting examples of post-colonial texts that had never been translated. There has been since then an excellent translation of the first novel as *Aranyak*, done by Rimli Bhattacharya and published by Seagull Books, Kolkata. Incidentally on the occasion of the launch of the book, Seagull arranged a symposium inviting some of the prominent academics, critics and litterateurs of Kolkata to draw up their own list of what they regarded as the ten best novels in Bengali. The rationale of such a discussion was that it would provide the publishers a shortlist of Bengali fiction, which could be taken up as a translation project. Interestingly almost none of the novels mentioned was part of the mainstream popular fiction and many of them were long out of print. The reason why I mention this is that if we are to extend our knowledge of the range and variety of post-colonial fiction, then these novels will have to be discovered anew and translation ventures with specific ideological and cultural aim of dissemination will have to be undertaken if they are ever to find a Benjaminian 'after life'.

It was grappling with the task of drawing up a list of Bengali texts available in English translation that the complete omission of writing from Bangladesh in any discussion of post-colonial studies occurred to me as a distressing gap. One reason for this was perhaps unlike India that has witnessed the rise of fiction in English the narration of this nation has happened almost entirely in Bengali. Indeed it is possible to



say that translation, as dissemination, is particularly pertinent in the case of Bangladesh. This is because its identity as a post-colonial nation is integrally linked to Bengali, which is also the language of West Bengal, the Indian state with which Bangladesh shares a border. Bangladesh came into existence initially as East Pakistan when the British, on the eve of their departure from India, decided to partition India on the basis of religion. Like sections of Punjab in the west, a portion of Bengal in the east with a Muslim majority population was made a part of Pakistan and named East Pakistan. The Bengali Muslims of East Pakistan, however, felt they had very little in common culturally and socially with West Pakistan and the first protest came against Urdu being imposed as the official language. The *bhasha andolan*, as it is popularly called, was a rebellion against linguistic domination. A bloody and violent struggle ensued which led to the death of several thousands and 21<sup>st</sup> February came to be recognized as the day to identify themselves with, a kind of National day for the people of East Pakistan. The landslide victory of the Awami League, a party based in East Pakistan, led to attempts by West Pakistan, primarily under the leadership of General Bhutto, to wrench political power from the hands of the leaders in East Pakistan.

The rebirth of East Pakistan as Bangladesh came in 1971 with *Mukti Juddha* or the 'freedom struggle' where Bengalis of East Pakistan fought against the military (popularly referred to as the *Khan Sena*) from West Pakistan. This twice-born nation has ever since zealously maintained its unique linguistic identity. Unlike India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka that have witnessed the rise of literature in English, the narration of this nation has happened almost entirely in Bangla. Given the monolingual nature of the state where all

people have access to Bangla, it is little wonder that there is no felt need within the country to translate their literatures into English. Thus this amazing treasure trove of post-colonial literature produced in Bangladesh has remained largely ignored by critics and is seldom included in the curriculum of Post-colonial Studies either in India or in the West.

My first acquaintance with fiction from Bangladesh was through a translation project whose aim was to bring out an anthology of contemporary Bengali women's writing. I was intrigued by the distinctiveness of the writing by women of Bangladesh in terms of theme or content as well as the use of language. My curiosity in fiction from Bangladesh was further whetted by a piece of gossip concerning Humayun Ahmed<sup>3</sup>, one of the most popular contemporary Bangladeshi writers. Ahmed, we were told, had bought a small island and the source of his wealth was not inheritance but royalty from his books. This sounded like utopia. I began reading Humayun Ahmed rather skeptically with the preconceived notion that the popularity of a writer was directly proportional to the lack of serious cultural and ideological commitment in his work and was thrilled to be contradicted by what I encountered. It taught me a lot about the reading public and the literary culture of Bangladesh.

This brings me to the last section of my essay. In this section I shall use extracts from my translation of one of Humayun Ahmed's short stories, *'Fazlul Karim Saheb's Relief Work'* to drive home the twin points of the need to translate powerful vernacular post-colonial fiction into English to provide a corrective to the myopic vision of post-colonial fiction in the contemporary Anglophone world, and to

demonstrate the possibility of evolving strategies to counter pressures of transparency and fluency that obscure 'otherness' and perpetuate a form of cultural and linguistic imperialism.

Ahmed's forte is terse, cryptic and black humour and in this short story he uses irony to explore the predicament of a post-colonial nation reeling under the weight of poverty, international aid and bureaucratic red-tapism. The author's strategy in telling the story is to use the point of view of Fazlul Karim, a self important and inefficient minister who is deeply suspicious of his bureaucratic officials and team of relief workers, and feels that he is thwarted in his heroic attempt to go in search of flood victims to whom he has to administer foreign aid. A narrative voice of mock sympathy is used to underscore the fact that Karim is a pusillanimous being and quite incapable of getting a grip on the situation.

*The minister is waiting in the steamer but the journey is delayed indefinitely:*

*"So what are we waiting for?" he asked in a disgusted tone.*

*"The sareng hasn't arrived, Sir."*

*"Why hasn't he come?"*

*"I do not know, Sir. He was supposed to come at nine o'clock"*

*Fazlul Karim Saheb looked at his watch. It was twenty minutes past eleven. He himself was supposed to come at eleven and was bang on time. The personal assistant, however, had only arrived at ten past eleven. They could afford to do such things simply*

*because he was a mere deputy minister. "There is a chair on the deck, Sir. Please sit down and rest. Someone has been sent to fetch the sareng".*

*He sat down on the cushioned cane chair looking displeased. Quite a few chairs were empty but everyone else remained standing. In a magnanimous tone he said,*

*"Why are you standing? Please take a seat. One never knows when this steamer will leave. Bangladesh is a country where nothing happens on time".*

*"Only the flood Sir, is quite regular"?*

*Fazul Karim Saheb was thoroughly displeased. This was a comment from the fellow with the dark-glasses. It was a good repartee. He did not possess this gift. Witty phrases came to his mind but usually long after a conversation had ended.*

*After they finally embark upon the journey, the minister expresses a wish to take stock of the material on board:*

*"Who has the list of the relief material that we are carrying with us"?*

*"I have it, Sir".*

*"Well, go on tell me what we have"?*



*Hamid Saheb opened his file and brought out a list.*

*"Five hundred bottles of distilled water. Each two litres"*

*"What are we going to do with distilled water"?*

*"I wouldn't know, Sir. Seems like medical supply. We also have two bundles of boric cotton".*

*"We may get beaten up if we arrive with all this stuff".*

*"That is quite likely to happen, Sir. Quite a few relief teams have already been beaten up badly. Their clothes were stripped off and they were sent back naked".*

*"Are you trying to act smart with me? Is this some kind of a joke"?*

*"No Sir, this is the truth. One group. Probably some teacher's committee had gone with children's school texts, exercise books and pencils. They suffered this fate".*

*Fazlul Karim Saheb became very serious.*

*The fear of an imminent storm forces the party to retrace its course. They find a family afloat on a makeshift raft of banana stems and after a lot of*

*coaxing and cajoling they condescend to steer the raft near the steamer. The minister orders that they be given the regulation supply of clothes and also a tent:*

*In a small voice Hamid Saheb enquired what they were to do with a tent.*

*"Let them do whatever they please. Just follow my orders".*

*"The raft will sink under the weight of the tent, Sir."*

*"It will not sink".*

*The family was not willing to take the tent. Instead they came on board. There was a young girl who vomited as soon as she stepped on to the steamer. Fazlul Karim Saheb was petrified. Did that indicate the girl had cholera, he wondered. It was awful. He went into a foul mood and spent the rest of the journey locked in his cabin. He had fever.*

*The following day leading newspapers carried accounts of the relief work done by Fazlul Karim Saheb. The reports stated that the deputy minister of the Human Resources Department Janab Fazlul Karim Saheb had undertaken relief work under extreme adverse conditions and thus reinforced the pledge of the government in pulling out all stops to combat the flood situation. Following the super-human effort that he put in for twenty-four hours in very foul weather Fazlul Karim Saheb had fallen ill.*

*and had to be admitted to the Medical College hospital. The minister for Human Resource, Janab Ekhlas Uddin visited him in the hospital and garlanded him. In a tremulous voice he said that in the present situation people like Fazlul Karim Saheb did not hesitate to lay down their lives for the suffering and the poor. He rounded up his speech by quoting two lines of a poem written by Rabindranath Tagore in a voice choked with emotion "Ke ba age pran koribek dan tari lagi karakari". ("There is a tussle now amongst people to be the first martyr".)*

In this brief extract I have retained original Bengali words, *Sareng*, *Saheb* and *Janab* because they are culture-specific words whose nuances would be lost in their English equivalents. A *sareng* is a sailor in charge of a steamer and responsible for setting the course and steering it. Its closest equivalent would be 'captain' or the archaic 'boatswain' which I deliberately avoided because it carries a typical English connotation and would fail to convey the visual image of the working-class Bangladeshi Muslim that is immediately evoked by the mention of the river journeys in the country furrowed by countless streams and quite distinct from the association that a sailor or captain carries. *Saheb* (whose equivalent would be 'mister') is similarly retained because it is a form of address specific to the Muslim community and indicates a middle class gentleman, an esquire. In a Non-Muslim Bengali context the equivalent of *saheb* would be *babu* and *saheb* which came into circulation in the 19<sup>th</sup> century to signify a white English or European would be used in contemporary Bangla to refer to a bureaucratic official of a particular rank, primarily the head of an office. *Janab* is derived from Urdu and is used to refer to a

gentleman who is highly respected. Once again it is term specific to Muslim culture and peculiar to the Bangla of Bangladesh.

Retaining words of the source language that have certain cultural specificities and providing a glossary is indispensable for 'foreignizing' a text and serve as a strategy that will resist the temptations of fluency and transparency. I have kept the original Bangla of Tagore's poem and am providing the translation in parenthesis primarily because these two lines are very famous and serve as a kind of metonym for the nationalist struggle for Independence.

The other problem that is encountered as a translator of a Bangla text is the stylistic peculiarities of the language that seems to facilitate a present tense or a present continuous tense in the narrative. This coupled with very short sentences that often appear to be fragments or incomplete sentences but works perfectly well in Bangla, creating a sense of unfamiliarity that most translators wish to eliminate since it becomes an immediate stumbling block for the English language reader because this is seldom the practice in English. I do not claim to have been able to deal with this problem entirely since charges of syntactical errors are far more difficult to handle than the issue of lexical peculiarities. However, I have tried not to smoothen out the rough edges altogether so that the reader of these short stories is able to experience that s/he is encountering a translated work.

As a translator I realized that despite my access to the Bangla language I had to be continually conscious of the cultural differences and ideological imperatives that inform the



usage of Bangla in Bangladesh. It was this constant process of re-learning and negotiation with Bangla that I shared, yet at the same time that I was distanced from, which created the unique sense of experiencing the unfamiliar within the familiar. I would like to express this as an experience of in-betweenness, which is indispensable to the post-colonial translator.

## Notes

1. Rushdie claimed that the post-47 Indian writing in prose "*both fiction and non-fiction is ... proving to be a stronger and more important body of work than most of what has been produced in the eighteen 'recognized' languages of India, the so-called 'vernacular languages at the same time'*". (Meenakshi Mukherjee: 2000)
2. I have in mind of course the encyclopedic work edited by Susie Tharu and K. Lalitha (see Tharu and Lalitha 1991), not to mention a large number of autobiographies and memories that have been translated by feminists in recent times.
3. *A note on Humayan Ahmed*: Born in 1948 in the Maimansingh district of Bangladesh, Ahmed studied Chemistry and received his Ph.D. from North Dakota State University, US for his work in polymers. Ahmed is a faculty member of the Department of Chemistry in Dhaka University. His first novel was published in 1972 and in that sense his birth as a narrator coincides with that of his nation. A prolific and powerful writer, Humayun Ahmed has received the Bangla Academy

Award for his contribution to Bengali Literature in 1981.

## References

Ayer, Pico (1993). **The Empire Writes Back**. Time.

Bassnett, Susan and Trivedi, Harish (ed.) (1999). **Post-colonial Translation: Theory and Practice**. London and NY: Routledge.

Bhabha, Homi (1994). **The Location of Culture**. London and New York: Routledge.

Menon, Ritu (2001). "*Publishing and Translation*" in Rukmini Bhaya Nair (ed), **Translation, Text and Theory: The Paradigm of India**. New Delhi: Sage Publications.

Mukherjee, Meenakshi (2000). **The Perishable Empire**. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.

Mukherjee, Meenakshi (2000). **The Vintage Book of Indian Writing 1947-1997**. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.

Niranjana, Tejaswini (1992). **Siting Translation**. Hyderabad: Orient Longman.

Venuti, Lawrence (ed.)(1992). **Rethinking Translation: Discourse, Subjectivity, Ideology**. London and NY: Routledge.

Trivedi, Harish "*India and Post-colonial Discourse*" in Kar.C.Prafulla (ed) **Critical Theory: Western and Indian.** (1997). New Delhi: Pencraft International.

Tharu, Susie and Lalitha K (ed.) (1991). **Women Writing in India.** New Delhi: Oxford University Press.

Viswanatha, Vanamala and Simon, Sherry (1999). "*Shifting grounds of exchange: B.M. Srikantiah and Kannada translation*" in Harish Trivedi and Susan Bassnett (ed) **Post-colonial Translation: Theory and Practice.** London and NY: Routledge.

# VERNACULAR DRESSING AND ENGLISH RE-DRESSINGS: TRANSLATING *NEEL DARPAN*

JHARNA SANYAL

***Abstract:** Our experience of Bangla literature of the 19<sup>th</sup> century Bengal compels us to rewrite and expand the parameters of post-colonialism as a discourse. This discourse is not simply about texts produced after the colonial experience, but about responses to the colonial experience from the very moment of the cultural encounter. The post-colonial in Dinabandhu Mitra's *Nil Durpan* (1960) is 'a way of talking about the political and discursive strategies of colonized societies...' (Ashcroft, 2001:24). The politics and the strategy are evident in the preface of the play, which seems to be a translation of a 'subjunctive' English text. The first English translation of the play may be read along with the 'more faithful' later translation (1992) to recognize these ways of talking/representation.*



*"Because if...the work was so injurious in its vernacular dress, was I not doing a public service by making such work in English?" (From the Address of the Reverend J. Long to the court before the sentence was passed) (Rao 1992: 148).<sup>1</sup>*

Dinabandhu Mitra, one of the most powerful dramatists of the 19<sup>th</sup> century Bengal, wrote his first play *Neel Darpan* (1860)<sup>2</sup> on the oppressive behaviour of the white Indigo planters in Bengal in the 1850s. The play revolves round an old landholder and his family: it graphically dramatizes the plight of that family and the peasants of Lower Bengal through scenes of physical torture, rape, madness and death.

The Bangla play was in itself a contemporary stage success. It however became historically and politically famous after it was translated into English as *The Mirror of Indigo Planters* (1861). The subsequent trial of Rev. James Long who confessed to have published and edited the translation (148) is a part of India's colonial history. It also testifies to the importance of translation in the project of the British Empire.

The preface to the play addresses the numerous indigo-planters who are offered the *neel darpan* ('the indigo mirror'), 'so that they may take a look, reflected in it' (183). Mitra transposes the social, political and economic situations affected by the tyranny of the indigo planters to a literary field superimposing 'readability' on the dispersed events of the time by translating the events into a play. That he was conscious of the transposition is evident in the title of the play, which offers *darpan* ('mirror') as the central image. He develops the preface on a metaphorical networking: the politics of this

metaphorical recasting lies in elevating the local cultural markers to universal moral properties. The 'sandal paste' with which the selfish planters are requested to adorn their foreheads stands for benevolence. The European milieu, by such metaphoric use, is transposed to a Hindu field of signs. In his preface, Mitra employs this transitional strategy to invoke the universal 'moral' world of good and evil, right and wrong and thus rescues the issue of human relationships from the political identities of the dominator and the dominated. The contingent power structures, the legitimising identities that facilitate discriminatory credentials, collapse under the universal moral categories of good and evil. The ideas of 'good' and 'evil' are translated through the metaphors of 'lotus' and 'worm': the good '*sahibs*', the good governors like Grant and Eden are the '*lotus*' in '*the lake of civil service*' and the indigo planters are the '*worms*' eating into the fame of the British. The planters are warned that the good civilians like Grant, '*the very personification of Justice*', will wield their judicial power to save the oppressed: '*Holding the sudarshan chakra in their own hands, they will rid the peasant of the evil demon Rahu, who has seized him, and causes him unbearable misery in the form of the indigo planter*' (184). The planters and the civilians, the malevolent and benevolent '*sahibs*' both are Indianized through metaphors and they internalise and submit to an expected pattern of behaviour. I would argue that in such use, the sign becomes the site of 're-territorialization'. The aliens are domiciled in the territory of Indian myths, the oppressor as demon and the protector as the *sudarshan chakra*-wielding Krishna.

Mitra's preface is addressed to the Indigo planters as if waiting to be translated into English. Unless that is done the

voice cannot be activated. As Long said in defense of the translation, "*The ryot was a dumb animal who did not know his rulers' language*" (Raos 1992 :149-50). The preface is an appeal; it is not a part of the play. It is meant to be read and therefore must be rendered in the language of the addressee. Dinabandhu Mitra, later awarded the title '*Raisaheb*', would have made his prefatory appeal in the language of the colonizers. This subjunctive text therefore seems to wait to be written back into English. As for the play, a performance of the original Bangla play would be an effective translation. When the play was being staged in Lucknow (1875), after the rape scene in which a planter was humbled by a Muslim peasant to enrage the British audience, '*they crowded near the footlights*' and a few British soldiers drew their swords and climbed on the stage. The show was then ordered to be withdrawn (3).

*Neel Darpan*, contrary to popular belief, is hardly the revolutionary 'pre-test' play it is championed to be. And although its invective is ostensibly against British indigo-plantation owners, the political scheme of the plot owes more to middle-class conceptions of rebellious behaviour than the organized, though unsuccessful, subaltern uprising that the indigo movement of 1860 actually had been. That the vernacular play and the playwright were considered potentially innocuous is supported by the fact that Dinabandhu Mitra was awarded the title '*Raisaheb*' for his service to the British Empire (in the postal department during the Lusai war) in 1871 (i.e. 11 years after the publication of his play). It is believed that he wanted to share the punishment of Long, but the court held Long solely responsible. Another report says that when the troop performing *Neel Darpan* in Lucknow had the fear that the English magistrate in the audience might be offended,



it was assured by the magistrate that it had nothing to be afraid of: Dinabandhu Mitra was his friend (3). The proceedings and the result of the trial of James Long amply proved the greater political potential of the target language text than that of the source text.

If Mitra's play was written to appeal to the white planters, Long's publication was to warn the powers that be. In his address to the court before the sentence was passed, Long had said,

*I can only state ...what is personal to myself as to the motives which actuated me to publish Nil Darpan, on the grounds of my being a Missionary - an expounder of native feeling as expressed in the native press - a friend to securing peace for Europeans in the country - and a friend to the social elevation of the natives. (147)*

We remember that the statement above is a part of Long's defense at the court. It is however interesting to note his prioritization of identities. He is a missionary, expounder of the native press, friend to both the parties, the Europeans and the natives. The '*social elevation of the natives*' (147) was required to ensure the peace of the Europeans and to preach the gospel. He wrote: '*Christianity has as yet made comparatively little headway among the population of Bengal. In my own observation and experience one of the most prominent causes appears to be mental, moral and social degradation of the ryot*' (Mitra 103). He had lectured on *Peasant Degradation: An Obstacle to Gospel propagation* (153).<sup>3</sup> That he was thinking more in terms of the propagation of the Bible and



political sagacity than for the cause of secular human concern is manifest in his situating the issue of oppression in a contingent political background.

*Russia & Russian influence are rapidly approaching the frontiers of India (150) ... the mere armies can no more secure the English in India...my duty as a clergyman is to help the good cause of peace ...by containing & listening to their complaints. (151)*

This colonial project of translation was mainly political; it was an act of surveillance facilitating knowledge of and subsequent control over the dominated subject. By his own admission, Long had been submitting '*hundreds and thousands of Bengali Books during the last ten years to the notice of Europeans of influence*', '*sending copies of all Bengali translations*' and '*procuring vernacular books of all kinds for missionaries*'. In the case of *Nil Durpan* there was nothing exceptional he had pleaded. He admitted to have '*... edited (the translation) with a view of informing Europeans of influence, of its contents, as giving native popular opinion on the indigo question...*'. He, of course, added that he had '*circulated it chiefly among men of influence in England and those connected with the legislature, which to the oppressed of whatever colour or country had always afforded sympathy & redress*' (147-156)<sup>4</sup>. This sympathy and redress would also facilitate the prospect of propagating the Bible.

It was therefore the content of the text that mattered. Long wrote an introduction in which he explained the reasons for undertaking the venture, but there is hardly anything about

the difficulties or the problems of translating such a culturally different text, nor anything about the translation strategies. The editorial presence is observed only in the passages '*expunged or softened*' as they were found to be too coarse for or offensive to European taste. Such passages, Long had said, were the '*prominent ... defects in many Oriental works of high reputation*' (Mitra 2001:101). There is a perfunctory glossary at the end of the translation; its inadequacy became obvious when Long had to explain in the courtroom certain culture-specific perceptions in order to assuage his offended readers. In Act I. Sc.4 of the play, one of the female characters belonging to the lower class makes disparaging remarks about Mrs Wood's (wife of the tyrant indigo-planter Wood) familiarity with the magistrate. The British took this to be a slur on their women: Long had to explain the difference in cultural/social perceptions in such matters and elucidate the problems of translation and reception of alien cultures in a courtroom in Calcutta.

The translation as the title page shows is by "*a native*". However, he seems to be a native who had very little acquaintance with Bangla idioms, phrases or words. There are many inaccurate translations deserving to be called 'howlers'. Of many such, I may mention two: a woman says, her husband had offered her a '*bau*'. This is a short form of '*bauti*' or '*baju*', a variety of bangle. The word is phonetically close to '*bou*', daughter-in-law. The 'native' translator translated the sentence as, '*... He even wanted to give me a daughter-in-law*'. The second is a literal translation of a Bangla idiom that means 'to go on a fast': '*I will not give rice and water to my body*'. Such absurdities make out a strong case against the story that Michael Madhusudan Dutt was the 'native' translator<sup>5</sup>. In the

seventies, several scholars argued convincingly against the claim (*Sengupta 1972 Preface viii-xxii*). Even the British jury refused to believe that the translator was a native (Proceedings of the trial as printed in Pradhan 1997:114).

## II

In 1992, Oxford University Press published a translation of the play in the book, *The Blue Devil: Indigo and Colonial Bengal with an English Translation of Neel Darpan*. Four editions were published in between the publications of Long and the Raos.<sup>6</sup> All the four are reprints of Long's publication. The last two make alterations/corrections in the original translation, but the result is not always felicitous (*Sengupta 1972: xxx-xxxiii*). The OUP edition is perhaps the first (post-Independence), and till now the last, direct translation from Dinabandhu Mitra's Bangla play.

Dinabandhu Mitra addressed the benevolent administrators and the oppressive indigo-planters and wrote to seek redress for the oppressed natives and to appeal to the administrators to salvage their fame. Long had similar motives behind the translation, but his readers were the '*Europeans of influence*', and he intended his work to be also a warning against possible rebellion (his reference was to the Mutiny). The Raos, the authors of *The Blue Devil* felt the '*necessity for a modern annotated translation of the play to perceive the reality of the oppressive world Dinabandhu Mitra had portrayed*' (12), and they declare that their translation is 'for all' (13).



From a postcolonial/post-Independence perspective, the play acquires a fresh significance. With the change of historical context, the relevance of the play/translation is not lost, but altered. The title of the book indicates a changed perspective against which the translation is set: the historical backdrop, the context of the play, the documents of Long's trial and other such contemporary socio-political details become a part of the extended textuality of the play. The contents page provides the initial idea of this arrangement: seven chapters that deal with the colonial context precede the translation of the play. Such multilayered textual strategies are common in contemporary literary works intended for an intercultural audience. Embedded texts like footnotes/endnotes, glossary, and such other para-textual devices, (also called extratextual rewritings, or the translator's long hand – Editors), used in such literary translations and in post-colonial writings suggest that the differences between the two '*are more prima facie than they are upon close consideration*' (Tymczko 2000:22).

The personal narrative of the authors relating to the conception and execution of the project of translation shows the way they had read a contemporary account of oppression in the play of 1860. During their visits to the villages that were once the indigo-planting areas, they had heard various kinds of tales about the planters and their atrocities. '*Despite these exhilarating tales the villagers had lost all interest in those oppressors; new, indigenous oppressors, no less ruthless, had begun to take their place*' (1-2; my emphasis). On the one hand, the authors situate the play on the local political/historical map (literally, the maps of colonial Bihar, the indigo-growing provinces are provided), and on the other; they release it from the local by connecting it to the global



theme of oppression and exploitation that transcends time and space. The ideological stance is foregrounded through the quotation from Brecht, which precedes the contents page.<sup>7</sup>

Thus, the function of this text differs from Dinabandhu Mitra's and Long's as well. Translation, as Snell-Hornby has aptly reminded us, is not a trans-coding of words or sentences from one language to another, but a complex form of action whereby the translator offers information on a source language text in an altered, new situation and under changed functional, cultural, linguistic conditions, retaining the formal aspects as far as possible (see Bassnett and Lefevere 1990: 82). The awareness of the difficulties involved in translating a text which is written in colloquial, dialectal and other varieties of language that a village community speaks (in fact, the language is difficult even for a modern day Bengali) is manifest in the translator's statement (11-13):

*All translators face the difficulty of choice and unwittingly many tend to become creators of their own discourse rather than the faithful renderers of the original. We too faced this problem. We wanted our translation to be readable, but above all we wanted our text to stick to the original without altering the ideas or dispensing with local sayings, songs, idioms and mythological references. We have adhered to the text meticulously, but within permissible limits tried to clarify some points, so that they might be understood and appreciated by all (Mitra 1992:13).*

The authors have used notes and a glossary as supplementary texts to bring out the nuances of specific cultural and social practices. The innovativeness of the work lies in translating the different Bengali varieties used by the native and the English characters. In the original, the planters spoke a kind of *patois*, a nonstandard, corrupt form of Bangla that has been translated into a supposedly parallel nonstandard, 'corrupt' English. Irrespective of the distinction of their socioeconomic class and consequent difference in the language they speak, the natives are given Standard English speech. Here is an example:

*Wood: Case nothing - this magistrate good man - five years civil suit, case not end. Magistrate, my good friend. See, or evidence accept. New law use, four rascals jailed...*

*Gopinath: My Lord, Nabin Basu's helping the families of those peasants. He has lent his own ploughs, cattle and men to plough their land that they might not lose their crops (Mitra 1992: 217).*

This stylistic strategy successfully meets the challenge of translating such a linguistically difficult text. However, in spite of all the labour and meticulous care they have taken for the publication, certain areas of incomprehension surface only through the process of translation. Translation in this perspective is a re-reading of the source language text in response to the demands of the target language. The 'native' translator often takes for granted certain expressions without trying to probe into their cultural stamp. This is particularly

true of texts that deal with issues that are distant from our present day culture and concern. I refer to three translations of a passage, each different from the other and the one in *The Blue Devil* is the worst, as, not only does it fail to translate it, it mistranslates it, fortifying the mistranslation with a historically false information as a 'note'.

In Act IV Sc. 2, on being questioned by the Deputy Inspector why the senior pundit could not be seen for some days, a pundit answers:

1. Long's edition ... *It does not seem good for him now to go to and come from the college looking, with his books under his arms, like a bull bound to the cart. He is now of age.* (Mitra 53; my emphasis).
2. (the above as it '*should have been*' suggested by Shankar Sengupta);  
... It does not look nice for him to come college (sic) *when it is about time to erect for him the stake to which the bull of the sradh ceremony is tied* (Preface xxxii; my emphasis).
- 3.. *The Blue Devil* version ... *Besides it does not look nice to go to college every day with a bull's halter tied round one's neck and he is no longer young either* (237; my emphasis)

For the expression I have emphasized, the translators add: '*This is a reference to the necktie, which was introduced by the Europeans*' (270; note 2, Act IV).

The old Bengali proverb - to tie a *brisakastha* around one's neck - suggests extreme old age when a person bends

double.<sup>8</sup> 'Brishakastha' was a heavy wooden structure used for sacrificing bulls on *śrādh* ceremonies. The sheer weight of the frame to be set about 3 feet below and 6 feet above the ground is perhaps the source of the proverb. Anyone carrying it would be bent double; hence figuratively, extreme or stooping old age<sup>9</sup>. 'He has become very old' would have been a perfectly adequate rendering.

Another such major and irresponsible editorial misinformation may be cited from Pradhan's edition. In Act V, Sc.i, Wood the planter kicks Gopinath the manager. After Wood leaves the scene, Gopinath comments: '*...Oh! What kickings? Oh the fool is, as it were, the wife [wearing a gown] of a student who is out of college*'. The footnote runs as follows:

*The wife... College: the enlightened Bengali wife of those days was a departure from the run of ordinary women, in so far as she would not easily submit to her husband, but would, on the contrary, demand submission from him -Ed (83).*

This explanation has no historical support whatsoever. The idea of the enlightened wife dominating, or maltreating her husband had its origin in the contemporary Bangla popular songs and numerous farces expressing the anxiety of the orthodox guardians of society who were apprehensive of the effect of formal education of the women of Bengal. The statement could have been constructed more meaningfully in the context of the complex dynamics of the relationship between the oppressor and the oppressed. In this respect, within the scope of this paper, I can only draw attention to the



note appended to this line by Long. The politics of interpretation is evident in the editorial avowal, '*This is said only in reference to his (Wood's) dress*' (Mitra 84, note 53; my emphasis). The carrying over (*translation*) of Wood to the domain of the wife would be feminizing the 'masculine Anglo-Saxon race' through the counter-gaze of the colonized other. The Raos have acknowledged the difficulty of decoding the lines by expunging them from their edition.

Unless translators translating from Indian regional languages into target languages (mostly English) work with special caution, they might disseminate incorrect information as in the cases mentioned above.<sup>10</sup> Re-dressing a vernacular text for a larger, multicultural reading public the translator represents a text, a culture for a global market: the value of the translated text as a disseminator of cultural identity/history depends much on the ethics of the translator.

## Notes

1. Quoted from *The Blue Devil*. (148). For complete details see the list of works cited. Unless otherwise stated, all citations with only the page no. in parenthesis are from this book. For the discussion of a major part of the contextual/historical matter, I have deliberately confined my references to this book as it draws on most of the important material available in English on the textual and contextual issues. Since my paper discusses their translation as well, interested readers may find it easier to locate contextual details in the same book. Those interested in looking up the original sources may consult the exhaustive bibliography provided in this book.

2. Two spellings are used: *Nil Durpan* as in Long's edition and *Neel Darpan* by the Raos - the latter retain the long 'e' sound of the Bangla word.
3. The missionaries considered the planters obstacles to their mission. Since the planters were also Christians the natives did not easily believe in the efficacy of Christianity. The animosity between the missionary and the planters was well known, and this was one of the main causes leading to Long's trial.
4. The oppression in the colonies hardly sustains this claim.
5. Besides Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay the novelist's comment that Madhusudan Dutt translated the play, there is no other evidence or supportive document in favour of the claim.
6. Simpkin, Marshal & Co, London 1862; Messers. A.N. Andini & Co. Calcutta, 1903; Pradhan and Sailesh Ch. Sengupta, Eastern Trading Co., Calcutta 1953-54; and Sankar Sengupta, Indian Publications, Calcutta, 1972.
7. The authors do not mention the source of the lines quoted. They are from the poem '*Literature will be Scrutinized*' from Martin Andersen Mexo. Brechi Poems, (ed) by John Willett and Ralph Manheim, 1981 repr. Radhakrishna Prakashan, New Delhi, I owe the information to Dr. Ramkrishna Bhattacharya, Anandamohan College, Kolkata.

8. *Bangiya Sabdakosh*, p.68. All editions of the Bangla original explain the proverb in the correct sense.
9. I owe the explanation to Sri Madhusudhan Verantatirtha.
10. There are many such examples, which may be cited: there is a reference to '*Rajah*' in Act I, Scene IV. (Radhakanta Deb and others who were the leaders opposing widow remarriage). This has been translated as 'king'. '*Rajah*' in this context is a conferred title, which has only to be transliterated, and not translated.

## References

- Ashcroft, Bill (2001). **Post-Colonial Transformation**. NewYork: Routledge.
- Bassnet, Susan and André Lefevere (ed) (1990). **Translation, History and Culture**. London: Pinter.
- Mitra, S (2001). **Prasanga Nil Durpan**. Kolkata: Doorbar Kalam.
- Pradhan, S & Sengupta. S.C. (1958). **Nil Durpan**. Calcutta: Indian Publications.
- Pradhan, S (1997). **Nil Durpan, or The Indigo Planting Mirror, A Drama Translated from the Bengali by a Native**. Calcutta: PashimBanga Natya Academi, Dept. of Information and Cultural Affairs, Govt. of West Bengal.

Rao, A. & Rao B.G. (1992). **The Blue Devil: Indigo and Colonial Bengal.** Trans.Dinabandhu Mitra Calcutta, Bombay, Madras: OUP.

Sengupta, S.C (1972). **Nil Durpan or the Indigo Planting Mirror by Dinabandha Mitra, Translation from the Bengali by a Native. Edited with an Introduction.** Calcutta: Indian Publications.

Snell-Hornby, Mary (1995 [1990]). "*Linguistic Transcoding or Cultural Transfer? A Critique of Translation Theory in Germany*", in Bassnett, S. and Lefevere, A. (eds) **Translation, History & Culture.** Great Britain: Cassell.

Tymckzo, Maria (2000 [1999]). "*Post-colonial Writing and Literary Translation*" in S Bassnett and H Trivedi (eds) **Post-colonial Translation: Theory and Practice.** London and New York: Routledge.



# POST - COLONIAL TRANSLATION: GLOBALIZING LITERATURE?

PURABI PANWAR

***Abstract:** Translation of classical Indian texts into English was started by orientalist scholars like William Jones with a definite agenda. The agenda was to give the western reader a feel of the Indian mystique. The choice of texts and the strategies employed were in accordance with this agenda. This paper starts off from post-colonial translation. The main body of the paper looks at post-colonial translation as a part of globalization, an attempt to give global dimensions to local/regional texts. It enumerates the changes that a literary work undergoes in the process of being translated, specially when the target language is the language of the erstwhile colonizer and the target readership the so-called first world. The factors that influence the translator and can become problematic are taken up in detail. The first and foremost is the choice of the text in the source language and the reasons behind it. Fidelity to the source language text is taken up along with the strategies that the translator employs in translating what is strictly local/regional like folk songs, folk traditions etc. Condensation or deleting what seems irrelevant in the source language text is another problem area. The paper quotes from translations or opinions on some of these issues*

*expressed by translators. The paper concludes with the felt apprehension that post-colonial translation can destroy the local/regional identity of a literary work if these problem areas are not tackled sensitively.*

To take a look at the term 'translation' and its Hindi/Bangla counterpart *anuvad* or *rupantar* before starting a paper on post-colonial translation would be in order. Translation has been defined by a number of scholars. F.L. Lucas's definition seems the most representative of the western way of thinking. According to him, the aim of translation is "*to try to compensate the intelligent reader for his ignorance of the language concerned, and to give him, however imperfectly, the impression he would be likely to get, if he read the original fluently himself.*" Translated texts therefore are accorded a second rate place and the act of translation itself is considered far from creative.

In the multilingual Indian context the terms *anuvad* or *rupantar* attach no such stigma to the act of translation or the translated text. *Anuvad* literally means 'that which comes following something else' and *rupantar* means 'change of form'. These differences must be kept in mind as one looks at the way translation has evolved and carved a niche for itself in literature in recent years, especially in a multilingual country like India. Creative activity similar to adaptation, which involves rendering classical texts like the *Gita*, the *Ramayan* and the *Mahabharata* into languages easily understood by the people, has been quite popular in India for a long time now. Thus translation, to use the term in its broadest sense, has been a common literary practice in this country for a long time now, may be for centuries. This is in keeping with our multilingual

and multicultural set up which allowed translation to evolve freely as a creative activity and not be tied down by theories.

However translation has a western context and was undertaken as a serious venture in the latter half of the eighteenth century in India by Sir William Jones who came to this country as a judge. He is known for his mastery of Sanskrit, for his pioneering efforts in setting up the Asiatic Society in Kolkata and, most importantly, for his English translation of Kalidasa's *Shakuntala*. The circumstances leading to his English rendering of the well-known Sanskrit play are curious. In the words of a critic, *"he wanted to know whether Indians had plays as forms of literature, and if they had, what their nature was, and finally, whether they could be of use to him in the context of the administration of justice in India"*. (Sastry 1958:33) To start with, he translated a Bengali version of the play into Latin. This satisfied him and he translated it into English in 1789. His intention was to make *"one of the greatest curiosities that the literature of Asia has yet brought to light"* available to westerners. His rendering of the play is in prose (Arthur W Ryder and Laurence Binyon later rendered it in verse).

A look at Jones' translation reveals a tendency to comment elaborately. An example: Shakuntala feels that her blouse made of bark has been fastened rather tightly by her companion Priyamvada and complains to her other companion Anasuya. Priyamvada gives a reply, which that can be translated literally as: *"In this matter, blame your own youth that has enlarged your bust"*. Jones' translation runs like this: *"Will, my sweet friend, enjoy, while you may, that youthful prime, which gives your bosom so beautiful a swell?"*

Jones also translated Jayadeva's *Gitagovinda*. In his prefatory essay he says, "*After having translated the Gitagovinda word for word, I reduced my translation to the present form, in which it is now exhibited, omitting only those passages, which are too luxuriant and too bold for an European taste*". Thus, his translation is characterized by

- (a) tendency to elaborate and
- (b) selective omitting where *shringara* reaches a point of verbal excess.

One can understand the latter tendency when one takes into account the readership he catered to but the former is somewhat baffling.

In his book *Orientalism* Edward Said criticizes orientalist in general and Jones (and other translators) in particular for what he considers a problematic attitude towards the Orient on their part. For them the West is rational, developed, humane and superior whereas the Orient is aberrant, underdeveloped and inferior. Secondly, he feels that these scholars prefer abstractions about the orient, particularly those based on texts representing a 'classical' oriental civilization rather than direct evidence drawn from modern oriental realities. According to him the orientalist regard the Orient as eternal, uniform and incapable of defining itself and are at the bottom of something either to be feared or controlled. About Jones, he says, "*To rule and to learn then to compare the Orient with the Occident, these were Jones' goals, which, with an irresistible impulse always to codify, to subdue the infinite variety of the Orient to a complete digest of laws,*



*figures, customs and works, he is believed to have achieved"* (Said: 178).

One feels that despite the elaborate commentary that embellishes his translation and omissions that have been mentioned earlier, Jones and his contemporaries were not influenced as much by the biases mentioned by Said as the nineteenth century orientalist as also number of scholars (including translators) who came later. Among nineteenth century translators Edward Fitzgerald, who rendered *Omar Khayyam* into English, is a well-known name. While translating Attar's *Bird Parliament* from Persian, Fitzgerald wrote to Rev. E.B. Cowell in 1851.

*It is an amusement to me to take what liberties I like with these Persians who (as I think) are not poets enough to frighten one from such excursions, and who really do need a little Art to shape them.*

(Trivedi 1993:45)

This is a typical instance of the western translator's patronizing/colonizing attitude to the source language text (though the Persians were never colonized by the British) that according to him (there were very few women translators in the colonial period) was being 'improved' by translation. Even today there are writers and translators who deem it an elevation in status for a regional language text to be translated into English. In the main body of the paper I shall make an attempt to study some works recently translated from Indian languages into English with a view to looking at the changes made by some translators and the possible motives/intentions

behind them. I shall keep in mind this legacy bequeathed by the colonizer.

In his 'Translator's Note' to the English translation of Rabindranath Tagore's *Gora*, the late Sujit Mukherjee attaches a lot of importance to fidelity to the original. He says that the discrepancy between the Bangla text and Pearson's English translation that left out large chunks of the original motivated him to produce another translation of the novel. In his words, *"This discrepancy more than other reasons made me resolve to produce a new English translation. Let me claim that if it has no other virtue, at least it is a complete and unabridged rendering of the standard Bangla text"*. (Tagore 1997:479). In his collection of essays on translation, he reiterated his stand, *"A translation must necessarily be true to the original and act as a kind of lens, a viewing medium, through which the original may be scrutinized when necessary"*. (Mukherjee 1981:149). Interestingly, different translations of *Gora* indicate different readings of the novel and Tutun Mukherjee looks at these differences. *"It is a fact"*, she concludes, *"that words and language-use have polemical significance in Tagore, especially in this novel which debates issues of nationalism, religion, caste, class, gender and selfhood. The many translated versions of the text draw attention to the omissions, deviations, inflections, and emphasis as perceived by the reader-translators. These serve a greater purpose. The source text is enlarged and gains in what Andrew Benjamin has called 'differential plurality' "* (Rahman 2002).

There is another way of looking at it. Aruna Chakraborty who won the Sahitya Academy award for translation attaches great value to fidelity as well, but she

believes in being faithful to the spirit of the work, the nuances and the cultural context rather than merely to the written word. She believes, *"Some texts suffer a dent even if a line or phrase is taken away, with others it is possible to condense without significant loss to the original"*. Incidentally Chakraborty has translated canonical texts like Saratchandra Chattopadhyay's *Srikanta* and modern classics like Sunil Gangopadhyay's *Those Days (Shei Shamay)* and trimmed them considerably, in the latter case with the author's consent. Her main argument is that most Bangla novels first appear serially in magazines. The repetitions and meanderings are not edited when they come out in book form and therefore the translator is within his/her rights to edit it. A number of translators have very strong views on editing/condensing which they feel should be avoided in any case. Jasbir Jain is one of them. Her stand is very clear. *"The translator is not re-writing"*, she says, *"in the sense of ascribing a new meaning to the original text, or borrowing the theme to suit an adaptation, or to shift generic priorities. Therefore either one should translate or be clear about other choices"*.

The 'fidelity-betrayal syndrome' to use George Steiner's words, is no longer a simple this or that option. Susan Bassnett adds another dimension to it, *"Should the translation be faithful to the author"* she asks, *"or be faithful to those who cannot read the original language"*? Her answer to this question is that *"translation is all about negotiating, negotiating the world of the original author and the world of the reader"*. What one has to keep in mind throughout this process of negotiation is that the world of the reader (generally from the first world) should not be allowed to take over the translated text.



The translator has to, in other words, maintain a delicate balance between the source language and the language of translation. The translator might face problems rendering literary works with a folk bias in language, situation etc., but changing those in order to make the translated text more comprehensible (read 'palatable') to the western reader would only bring down their literary value. Equally disastrous would be literal word-to-word translation. Those of us who have read Bibhuti Bhushan Bandopadhyay's novels *Pather Panchali* and *Aparajito* in Bangla would have savoured the rhythm and lyricism of his language. When Gopa Majumdar started translating the latter novel into English she found that retaining every sentence of the original text did nothing to enhance the novel's readability. On the other hand "*What was eloquent and beautiful in the original, in a painstakingly faithful translation, sounded not just stilted, but archaic, fanciful, or positively melodramatic*" (Bandopadhyay, 1999:xvi). According to Majumdar (who has also translated Ashapurna Debi and Satyajit Ray and is now working on a biography of Michael Madhusudan Dutt) this is the "worst dilemma" of a translator which one has to solve oneself. In her own works she tries to retain as much of the original as possible and if she wants major changes to be incorporated, she tries to consult the author or the next of his/her in taking permission to deviate from the original. She puts it this way, "*A good translator has to be both brave and wise enough to know where changes can and should be made to the text to enhance readability, without changing or distorting the essential meaning of the original*". (Ibid) This balance between braveness and wisdom helps the text to retain its identity and not get sucked into the global whirlpool.



Translating indigenous/folk literature or even mainstream literary texts that are about tribal or indigenous people, is perhaps more challenging than translating mainstream literature and involves more complex negotiations. In an essay titled '*Are we the "folk" in this lok? Usefulness of the plural in translating a lok-katha*', Christi Ann Merrill talks about her experiences in translating a Hindi short story inspired by a Rajasthani folk tale. She observes, "*For a lok-centric vision of a story would see translation as less of a tangible carrying across in the English sense of the word, and more of an intangible telling in turn, as is suggested by the Hindi word for translation, 'anuvad'*". (Rahman 2002:78) I realized this when I read *A River Called Titash* (Barman: 1992) a novel by Advaita Malla Barman translated from Bangla into English by Kalpana Bardhan. The novel in Bangla titled *Titash Ekti Nadir Naam* is about the lives of the Malo people, communities of fisher folk on the banks of the river Titash in Comilla (a district in Bangladesh) at the turn of the last century. The author was himself from this community, its first educated man and writer. The novel, autobiographical to some extent, was completed shortly before the author succumbed to tuberculosis and published posthumously by a group of his friends.

The translator does not talk about her experiences in particular, but a reading of the preface along with the two texts, original and in translation, enables one to make some observations. In her preface Bardhan quotes Boris Pasternak who said "*The translation must be the work of an author who has felt the influence of the original long before he begins his work*". She talks about how she had wanted to translate this

novel for a long time and how it had left such a deep impact on her that she wanted to share it with the English language reader. *"I felt in the presence of a marvelously told tale of a people's capacity for joy and love, music and poetry, transcending their utter lack of material wealth and power, a tale of being human and in harmony with nature, of a community's vitality in ethics and aesthetics... The flowing narrative weaves scenes and viewpoints, events and reflections. And the amity portrayed between Hindu fishermen and Muslim peasants affirms and honours Bengal's trans-religious folk culture"*. (Bardhan 1992: preface, ix).

Bardhan does not talk directly about the problems she faced while translating this novel. However from the preface one gets the impression that she intensively researched the author's life, the community, the time and location and the songs, discussing the novel with the few surviving friends of the author who were involved in its publication. Bardhan says that a translation puts the novel firmly in its context and one appreciates the fact that there is no attempt by the translator to make it more palatable for the western reader. A novel like *Titdash* would lose its inherent spontaneity and *joie de vivre* if liberties were taken with it. The translator realizes this and does not attempt to universalize the specificities of the text or blur its focus. One is not very happy with the songs in English but it is amazing that they have been translated at all. One would have thought they were untranslatable. Also one looks at the possibility that the novel might be translated again in the future, may be improved on this translation. It is worthwhile to remember that every translation is always an ongoing process, incomplete and relative. No translated text can be taken as the

ultimate rendering of the source language text. There is nothing like a definitive or absolute translation.

Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak has translated a number of stories by Mahasweta Devi. As an academic/translator based in the US her translations, one feels, are mainly for the western reader, though she maintains in her *'Translator's Preface to Imaginary Maps'* that she caters to both. In her words, *"This book is going to be published in both India and the United States. As such it faces in two directions, encounters two readerships with a strong exchange in various enclaves. As a translator and a commentator, I must imagine them as I write. Indeed, much of what I write will be produced by these two-faced imaginings, even as it will no doubt produce the difference, yet once again"* (Spivak 1995). How does she negotiate *'these two-faced imaginings'* or, more pertinent to the issue under discussion, does she gloss over the specifically indigenous, in an attempt to universalize the appeal of these stories, which in Bangla have a sharply etched tribal context?

To some extent one feels that the issue of the tribal woman and the injustice done to her in a story like "Draupadi" has been changed to the issue of the woman activist in a patriarchal set up, as a result of Spivak's "reading" of the story "influenced by 'deconstructive' practice" to quote from her *In Other Worlds: Essays in Cultural Politics*. While this has been done with the author's consent, the implicit dangers in such a trend should be considered seriously, in an effort to make the translated text stand on its own and appeal to the first world reader, the translator might do away with what he/she considers problematic/irrelevant areas, which are actually

crucial according to the author and help to place the text in its right context.

One has perceived this trend in fields other than literature, the tendency to stereotype everything from developing countries with the result that they lose their identity and appear second rate. In literature too, there are writers (mainly of Indian origin) who portray India as the western reader would like to see it - exotic, mysterious and of course disorganized, in works that are projected as "post colonial" literature. There are writers like Chitra Devikarani who are "translating" culture in works like *The Mistress of Spices* for the benefit of the western reader. I was told that this novel was sold with a sachet of Indian spices to get the packaging right. In such a scenario when local/regional identities are often glossed over, one is highly apprehensive that the multiple layers of meaning, symbolism etc. of texts in Indian languages would be lost in English translation if the translator is only concerned with the market and saleability of the translated text in an attempt to fit it into the category of 'global literature', an insidious locution, which has gained currency of late.

Reading for the purpose of translation is extremely demanding and not influenced by external considerations like market forces, if it is done in the right spirit. To quote Sujit Mukherjee, "*Reading for translation may be placed at the highest level because not only must the translator interpret the text reasonably, he must also restructure his interpretation in another language while striving to approximate the original structure. He cannot subtract from the original. And he adds only at great peril*". (Mukherjee 1981:139).



A translator with these priorities firmly fixed would not succumb to current fads and let his/her mindset be dictated by forces that are swayed by a tendency to globalize everything. While translating literary works from one Indian language into another one is usually free from such influences, translating something into English is not, and the person/s undertaking it has/have to be very careful in order to let the translated text retain the identity it had in the source text.

Since knowledge of both source language and the target language, along with the socio-political-cultural nuances and connotations, is essential for quality translation, a team of translators, rather than an individual would be a better option, provided that the team works in consonance, the members complementing each other's efforts. This sort of team especially when it includes persona with a sound knowledge of the source and the target languages, the text and its context, would avoid the pitfalls of translating literature with an eye on the global market. The latter, often a commercially viable proposition, though not an authentically literary one, unfortunately appears to be the easy option at times. Of late, translation has become an important literary/academic pursuit and many universities in the west have an entire department of Translation Studies. On some counts it is an encouraging factor that the study of just one literature is never enough: it breeds an insular outlook. Only when one studies literatures from different countries/regions of the world, one can put them in perspective. So translation (done in the right spirit) is an important instrument in making post-colonial literatures accessible to readers worldwide. However, this can be achieved only if the translators resist the temptation to

universalize/globalize a text that is firmly rooted in its socio-cultural context.

## References

Bandyopadhyay, Bibhuti Bhushan (1999). **The Unvanquished**. Trans. into English by Gopa Majumdar. London: Harper Collins.

Barman, Advita Malla, (1992). **A River Called Titash**. Trans. into English by Kalpana Bardhan. New Delhi: Penguin.

Bassnett, Susan **Translation as a Form of Negotiation**. Interview with Sachidananda Mohanty published in *The Hindu* December 20, 1998.

Kaul, R.K. (1995). **Studies in William Jones: An Interpreter of Oriental Literature** Shimla: Indian Institute of Advanced Studies.

Mukherjee, Sujit (1981). **Translation as Discovery**. (np) Orient Longman.

Nair, Rukmini Bhaya (2002). **Translation, Text and Theory: The Paradigm of India**. New Delhi: Sage Publications.

Rahman, Anisur (2002). **Translation Poetics and Practice**. New Delhi: Creative Books.

Sastry, Krishna L.S.R. (1958). **Sir William Jones: Interpreter of India to the West.** (np.)Sastry, Krishna L.S.R.

Spivak, Gayatri Chakravorty (1995). **Imaginary Maps.** (np.) Routledge.

Tagore, Rabindranath (1997). **Gora.** Trans. Sujit Mukherjee. New Delhi:Sahitya Akademi.

Trivedi, Harish (1993). **Colonial Translations, English Literature and India.** Calcutta: Papyrus.

# TRANSLATING THE NATION, TRANSLATING THE SUBALTERN

MEENA T PILLAI

***Abstract:** Subaltern Studies as history from the lower rungs of society is marked by a freedom from the restrictions imposed by the nation state. Gramsci speaks of the subaltern's incapability to think of the nation. Once it becomes possible for the subaltern to imagine the state, he transcends the conditions of subalternity. It is interesting in this context to note that subaltern writings are read in translation either in English or in the dominant regional language. As the liberal humanist, bourgeois values of the modern nation state seep into subaltern languages, they either get translated and appropriated or are subverted and rejected. The latter is a conscious political act in the discursive field of language, which gives a distinct speaking voice to the subalterns whose attempt at linguistic freedom becomes an act of post-colonial insurgency. In the former case there is an inscription of the nation into subaltern consciousness and vice versa. Subaltern translations of the lingo of nationalism thus become an act of cultural displacement. Claiming the nation in language also means being claimed by the nation. This paper seeks to study how nationalism and the concept of the nation state get translated in subaltern writings in regional languages in the process of translating/mediating the very*



*condition of subalternity. It purports to compare two texts in Malayalam, Narayan's Kocharethi and K.J. Baby's Mavelimanrom, both of which attempt a subaltern re-imagining of the Indian State from the margins. Mavelimanrom consists of dispersed moments and fragments of history of the Adiyor tribe of Wayanad. It attempts to create an imagined community in the subaltern language and memory. Kocharethi, on the other hand, encloses a space of transition from the colonial to the post-colonial within the imagined boundaries of the nation state. A comparison of these two texts would be an exercise in contrast with the "sheer heterogeneity of decolonised space" and an exploration of the subtle nuances of the problem raised in subaltern translations of the nation.*

A literary text validates a language, the writing or reading of which entails a subject positioning. A consciousness of subject positions and voices can re-empower languages, deconstruct histories, and create new texts of more dense dialogical accomplishment. Part of the project of post-colonial theory would be to push literary texts into this shifting arena of discursiveness, thus enabling new stands of counternarratives and countercontexts to shape themselves and complicate binarist histories. This could be the reason why post-colonial theory assigns so much significance to the act of translation, which is seen, not as a peaceful dialogue among equals, but as a cultural and political practice, appropriating or resisting ideological discourses, constructing or subverting canons thus exposing the derivativeness and heterogeneity of both linguistic and cultural material.

This paper analyses two subaltern narratives, one of which displays a consciousness of the social hierarchies of dominant narratives of power and the need to implement discursive strategies to resist translation and thus evolve what Deleuze and Guattari would call '*a line of escape*', while the other, in contrast, fails to tap on linguistic and cultural differences of the target culture, thus being implicated and performing the vanishing act of the subaltern, indicating the translatability of the subaltern identity into the master language of the nation.

*Mavelimanrom* (1991) by K.J. Baby is a novel in Malayalam, consisting of dispersed moments and fragments of history of the Adiyor tribe of Wayanad. It documents a moment of their past, thus allowing the Adiyors to speak and talk back to the powers that marginalized them, by searching for a hidden past, fragmentary testimonials and lost moments. The novel seeks to restore the integrity of indigenous histories that appear naturally in nonlinear, oral, symbolic, vernacular forms.

It is an attempt to create an imaginary community in the subaltern language and memory. By reviving customs, rituals, myth and folklore *Mavelimanrom* attempts to configure an imaginary homeland for the Adiyors. In the tale narrated by the tribe elder Jevarapperumon to Ira, the woeful plight of their homeland unfolds itself.

'*Manrom*' denotes a tribe with reference to its spatial location. This narration of an alternative space is also a repudiation of the hegemonic structure of the 'nation' imposed on the subalterns. The imagined utopia of *Mavelimanrom*

problematizes the other imagined nation of 'India', simultaneously resisting and questioning all discourses narrating the nation. The text, thus, at one level, grapples with the problem of '*colonial historiography*' and '*cultural amnesia*' that critics like G.N. Devy lament, which are inherent in the construction of nation states. *Mavelimanrom* seeks to redeem the subalterns of this amnesia and to remind the reading subject that there is no essential, historical, homogenized Indianness.

*Mavelimanrom* could be called an exercise in what Lyotard calls '*anamnesis*' or a psychoanalytic procedure, which requires the patients to "*elaborate their current problems by freely associating apparently inconsequential details with past situations - allowing them to uncover hidden meanings in their lives and their behaviours*". Through this psychotherapy in and of memory the subaltern subject attempts a cultural, historical and psychological recuperation. Language becomes the painful medium of remembering, of confronting the ghosts of the past, to exorcise them in the present.

The novel is marked by a consciousness of the nationalist agenda to undermine and marginalize the subaltern resistance to British colonialism. The story unfolds during the time of territorial imperialism, when the East India Company had joined hands with feudalism to reinstate new modes of discrimination and power over subject populations. The novel begins with the leasing of a slave 'Kaippadan' to a new Master Subbappattar by his old feudal Lord Ambu Nair. One can read the re-empowering of old feudal systems within the imperial economy of the East India Company's exploitative agenda. *Mavelimanrom* attempts to afford the subaltern agency.

by rejecting the grand narratives of both imperialism and nationalism. By providing alternating ways of imagining/imaging community, it destabilizes the nationalist project. It attempts a renewal of images of the past through a discourse of the native subject as inscribed in histories of insurgency against colonial rule and as inscribed in popular memory and oral traditions. Since the insurrection of the Adiyors and Kurichiars of Wayanad was not a calculated political move for forging the energies of nation building, it does not find mention in elite discourses of anti-colonial movements or official archives. The insurgency of Pazhassi Raja finds special mention in the text as a breach between popular dissidence and imperial power. Whereas official history propagated the fact that Pazhassi was betrayed by a Kurichian, it was recorded later on that he was sold out by the feudal lords to the East India Company, which led to his downfall and execution. In A. Sreedhara Menon's *A Survey of Kerala History* the revolt of Kerala Varma Pazhassi Raja is written under the chapter title "*The Challenge to British Supremacy*". Pazhassi Raja was a king of the Kottayam Royal family who organized serious revolts against the British in Malabar in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century on account of their misdirected revenue policy. In the Pazhassi Revolt of 1793-1797 Pazhassi Raja scored a decisive victory over the British who suffered a critical loss of men and material and a truce was called for as a matter of political expediency. The second Revolt took place from 1800 to 1805 and this time the Raja was assisted by the Kurichiyar leader Talakkal Chandu. The war took the nature of guerilla warfare waged in the jungles of Wayanad. In 1804, Talakkal Chandu, the Kurichiyar hero was captured. On 30<sup>th</sup> November 1805, the Raja was shot dead by the British.



*Mavelimanrom* contests these nationalist histories which, by privileging the role of Pazhassi Raja, never acknowledged native dissent and signs of resistance. As Spivak points out, *"if the story of the rise of nationalist resistance to imperialism is to be disclosed coherently, it is the role of the indigenous subaltern that must be strategically excluded"*. Thus it is that there is an attempt to erase from history the valiant struggles of the Kurichiars under Pazhassi Raja. *Mavelimanrom* attempts to dismantle this notion of nationalism as *"the only discourse credited with emancipatory possibilities"* in the imperialist theatre and to write back into history *"the subaltern examples of resistance throughout imperialist and pre-imperialist centuries"*.

It illustrates the politicality of literature in a post-colonial context whereby the author reworks a historical moment to resist colonialism and its effects, and contests through language its discourses and hierarchies. Kaippadan and Ira's flight is marked by a desire to escape the landscape of oppression ('thampuranpadam' or the lord's fields) crossing hegemonic boundaries and structures that create unequal relations of power.

*Mavelimanrom* records the history of subalterns subjected to humiliation, cruelty and death. Theirs is a different version of identity, which has been elided over in history and it is this slippage that the text addresses. By delving on the subaltern craving for identity, expressed in a different language of experience and subjectivity, the text insists upon a representation of their quest in terms of political and personal power. Thus the novel becomes an attempt to

revive the mythology of a people without history, or whose history was being threatened with erasure even from memory.

Placed in the context of the Hegelian master-slave dialectics, the novel attempts to turn the gaze of the master on himself. The moment of reverting the Other's gaze is also a moment of recognition of the consciousness from knowing one's self as the translated self to knowledge of the self as untranslatable. The concept of '*manrom*' defines a special construct where the will to liberty overpowers even the will to life, a space where the slave de-codes the master's secret, the secret of the 'Other's' look, which moulds the 'self' to its state of servitude. The spatial and temporal construct of the '*manrom*', thus, cannot but repudiate colonialism's narratives of power and its project of civilizing the native, the theoretical underpinning of which is a resistance to the overarching narratives of nationalism. Nations and nationalisms are also constituted within a colonial grammar. In its efforts to imagine a precolonial moment of history, *Mavelimanrom* thus has to preclude the seepages of the imaginary essence of the nation, in short, to resist translating the nation.

The native of *Mavelimanrom* is the victim both of an imperial ideology and feudal authority. And yet the myth of the '*manrom*' is posited as a haven of refuge for the dispersed, dispossessed and dislocated subjectivities of natives who refuse to be consigned to their subject positions within the framework of the ruling ideologies of imperialism and feudalism. Such polysemic, anti-colonial subjectivities and their energies, which defy the definitions of the colonizer, are muted and translated into a monolithic national identity, articulated in the rhetoric of '*Nationalism*' in *Kocharethi*, a

Malayalam novel on the 'Malayaraya' tribe by Narayan (Narayan :1998).

While *Mavelimanrom* is set in the period of capitalist territorial colonialism and imperialism, *Kocharethi* takes place at the fag end of this phase, in the early half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. It encloses a space of transition from the colonial to the postcolonial within the imagined boundaries of the nation state. Thus, situated in a later milieu of Indian history, *Kocharethi* in a way addresses the questions of acculturation and education of the subaltern, in short, of the subaltern's translation as 'appropriation'. Education as a necessary ploy for moulding homogenous identities came packaged with the label promising equality and liberty. But the subaltern aspires for education in order to be liberated from the land and its woes. *Kocharethi* is filled with the new subaltern dream of a government job. Narayan makes a feeble attempt to parody this process of 'modernizing' the tribal. But the novel fails in demarcating a political position opposing colonial modernity. The discourse of nationalism with its dichotomies of material/spiritual, inner/outer, resurfaces again and again in the novel with obvious privileging of the spiritual and inner.

The novel *Mavelimanrom* is imbued with the knowledge and critique of imperialism as the ugly face of a particular kind of nationalism. *Kocharethi* reveals the slow acculturation of the native into the economy, culture and politics of the nation state. The native in *Kocharethi* falls prey to the project of colonial modernity, which the new Indian state sets out to continue in order to prove its capability to self-rule. As Partha Chatterjee points out, Indian nationalism thus "produced a discourse of which, even as it challenged the

*colonial claim to political domination, also accepted the very intellectual premise of 'modernity' on which colonial domination was based".*

*Kocharethi* depicts the plight of the native subaltern caught in the regulative politics of the infallible nation state, and betrayed by the promise of the participatory citizenship, struggling to find voice amidst the homogenized Babel of nationalist discourses. *Mavelimanrom*, in contrast, is a critique of the totalizing forms of nationalist historicism. It aims to regain the native's control over his/her own geography, language, literature and history. *Kocharethi* is a case in point of the 'hybridity' of the 'colonialist text' when the subject constitution of the native is proscribed in the liberal humanist tradition of modernity. *Mavelimanrom* on the other hand is marked by an attempt at understanding the 'native' before the process of his/her becoming a native is initiated by the colonizer. So it evinces a consciousness preceding colonization, which becomes the mark of the spatial identity of the '*manrom*'.

The narration of the myth of the *Manromis* used to establish and consolidate the local identity of the subaltern. *Mavelimanrom* is the conceptual space created through the resistance propaganda of the myth of the '*manrom*'. When the home of the Adiyors, the natural habitat is colonized, the myth of the *Manrom* becomes an attempt to resist looking at 'home' with the gaze of the colonizer. So remembering the original home, remembering and narrating the *Manrom* in one's own language, in the oral traditions of tribe becomes a mode of resistance to the colonial epistemology. The myth of the '*manrom*' thus gives a material and ideological identity to the



subaltern, which transcends the boundaries of the nation state. So the 'manrom' becomes an epistemological, cultural and spatial symbol of the transformative resistance of the 'Adiyors'. Narrating the Manromthus amounts to narrating a cultural identity and thereby creating a spatial identity for the subaltern. The keeping alive of the memory, myth and songs ('thudippattu') even at the cost of risking lives becomes an act of revolutionary consciousness. In contrast, state hegemony, nationalist ideology, dominant language and cultural interpellation - all collude to construct the native of *Kocharethi* as a passive subject.

By producing an alternative discourse of gendered subalternity, *mavelimanrom* becomes the site of an ideological warfare. Veering away from the stereotypical portrayal of women in much of mainstream Malayalam writing, the women of the novel are portrayed as possessing a strong individual and sexual identity. Refusing to be confined to sexually defined roles, they write themselves into the text through their life and struggles. With a strong sense of their own history and collective identity, they evince knowledge of their role as important links in a secret tradition of solidarity and resistance. One comes across a vibrant woman's subculture, kept alive through mutual interactions and exchange of stories and songs. This is what prompts them to forge new bonds with their past, a bonding in sisterhood, which fires the memory of '*Keeyorathi*', their great ancestor in the flight for freedom.

As the narrative unfolds, the reader is caught in the realization that the subaltern man's experience of oppression is different from the subaltern woman's experience and the focus

shifts to the shaping of patriarchy by class, caste and colonialism.

The reconsolidation of native patriarchy by imperial power is countered in *Mavelimanrom* by recharging the old myths with new possibilities of meaning. In one of the most powerful feminist critiques ever attempted in Malayalam literature *Mavelimanrom* offers a scathing attack of the hegemonic, nationalist, patriarchal code, completely subverting its discourses which represent the subaltern as the domesticated 'other'. The subaltern women of *Mavelimanrom* - Chambi, Jevani and Ira - take a vow not to be impregnated by any man subscribing to this patriarchal code. The dominant tradition of imaging the land as women also glorifies woman's fertility and her capacity to nurture. Not giving birth by willful abortion becomes an act of defiant subversion. Refusing gender-specific roles, the women also refuse representation in the paradigms of the sexual/maternal body.

Rape as a prominent signifier in *Mavelimanrom* is used as an analogue for the violation of the land and other economic and political exploitations. Those blatant descriptions of rape are often used to reveal the rape mentality of the colonizer more than the experience of the oppressed women. Women's bodies thus become larger battlegrounds where greater territorial and cultural battles are waged; the gendered subalterns of *Mavelimanrom* are choked by the power of the colonial master, even over their reproductive capacities. Denied all sense of subjectivity, positioned as sexual merchandise and forced to breed a slave class to cater to the needs of colonialism's labour market, the subaltern women is forced to present her sexual, social and reproductive labours as

offering before the Master. And yet the women of *Mavelimanrom* speak. Rejecting patriarchal, feudal or imperial norms of caste and class, they join together, refusing to break up under the phallic rule. They stand testimony to the subaltern's muted voice-consciousness. Thus, *Mavelimanrom* attempts an epistemic unsettling of both patriarchy and imperialism by turning to the archives of colonial dominance to unearth the ideology of patriarchal canons.

In contrast *Kocharethi* embraces and enhances the task of colonial modernity to instill middle class values and bourgeois virtues into the gendered 'national' subaltern subject. The new woman, conscious of her identity, is at the same time out of her roots. As Parvathy, the educated subaltern migrates to the city, the narrative, in an allegorical twist leaves Kochuraman and Kunjipennu stranded in a government hospital, at the mercy of state welfare aids. Thus one sees the articulation of gender being translated into a different idiom by the interventions of the modern state. Narayan assumes a nationalist identity by which he sees the education of subaltern women as necessary, but not at the cost of losing the essence of their 'femininity' and 'culture'. The ideological distance from Javani and Ira to Kunjipennu is a space articulated by a translated colonial discourse, which constructs the woman as the upholder of tradition, an embodiment of its representation. Kunjipennu sees Parvathy's education as encroaching upon her feminine essence. Kunjipennu is thus made to fit into the ideological framework of the nationalist narration of woman. Though the need for education of women is presented as imperative, the anxiety that it might devalue feminine virtues like chastity, modesty, patience and devotion persists. Here as before, one can see caste Hindu signs and symbols translated

into the tribal discourse. Thus the process of subjection of the subaltern woman under new patriarchal codes of upper caste Hinduism is initiated. The uniqueness of *Mavelimanrom* as a subaltern text is that it creates a history for the subaltern, where the female subject has a speaking voice and participates in insurgency. Whereas in *Mavelimanrom* Kaippadan and Ira share the responsibility of sowing the seeds of the 'manrom'; the women of *Kocharethi* have no role in the struggle for independence. As Parvathy inhabits the secure space of her home, Madhavan and his comrades go out into the public domain to free the nation, thus lending their subaltern identities to structure the hegemony of a patriarchal nationalist culture.

A close reading of *Kocharethi* reveals the nuances through which gender and ethical relations become inextricably linked to the formation of the Indian state. *Kocharethi* is, in a sense, the tragic culmination of the heroic struggle waged by the women in *Mavelimanrom* over dominant, capitalist modes of production. The dream of the *Manrom* has transmogrified itself into the hard reality of the Indian nation state. Together, these novels provide a framework to picture the formation of India as a sovereign, socialist, democratic republic, where native and gender identities are subsumed and tokenized to strengthen the unifying logic of the nation.

Language is a fundamental site of struggle in subaltern discourses resisting translation, because colonization begins in language. The language of *Mavelimanrom* is an eclectic mixture of literary Malayalam, colloquial Malayalam, tribal Malayalam and the specific language of the Adiyors of



Wayanad. The evident pull towards colonial modernity and nationalist themes in *Kocharethi* is found in its language too, which is very near standard Malayalam, the disjunctions being minimal. There is no attempt to capture the linguistic and cultural ethos of the language of the Malayaraya tribe. While in *Mavelimanrom*, language seeks to create a distance between the nation/empire and the subaltern space, in *Kocharethi* there is an attempted translation of this space. *Mavelimanrom* rejects the stylistic hierarchies of standard Malayalam and thus politically subverts its authorities. By introducing the music and method of tribal languages, their modes of expression and aspects of orality, *Mavelimanrom* underwrites the power invested in the print language. While destabilizing the standard language is a palpable project in *Mavelimanrom*, *Kocharethi* appropriates Malayalam and uses it to the contingencies of a different cultural context. Though the latter effect is in no way belittled, for it too produces a different culturally marked Malayalam - lexically, semantically and phonetically, the former offers a more radical approach to write the continually shifting subaltern subjectivities into a new indigenised language which does not conform to the paradigm of the formal Malayalam sociolect.

The received notion that the print language is the 'proper' language is done away with in the novel by endorsing the varied and various narratives are at endless play under the sign of a single language. The subaltern's simultaneous adoption of the roles of singer, story-teller, author and player, oppressed subject and resisting speaker creates the need for a language encapsulating such constantly shifting subjectivities. The inadequacy of the language of the centre to express the cognitive information of the peripheries and its inability to

delineate subaltern group identity and culture crystallizes in *Mavelimanrom*'s compulsion to stretch the norms of Malayalam language. New words are accommodated in the lexicon along with flagrant deviations in grammar, syntax, phonology, accent and structure, in the process toppling the authority of the colonial discourse. The songs or '*thudipattu*', as an alternative discourse, becomes a powerful political and linguistic strategy of resistance. The songs and singing with all their associated cultural significations take on a disruptive function, carnivalising societal norms. In *Kocharethi*, one finds by contrast a silencing of the native tongue. That the arrival of nationalism and its accompanying cultural fictions proved effective in erasing those signs and symbols that problematize modernity and its project of homogenization is what a closer reading of *Kocharethi* reveals.

The subaltern community in *Kocharethi*, having lost its language, and having been translated and co-opted into the dominant discourse, has also lost the power to name. 'Parvathi', 'Madhavan', 'Narayanan' - all names of upper caste Hindu gods - speak of the silencing of a culture. A community devoid of its language is a community devoid of dignity. While *Mavelimanrom* emphasizes the linguistic and cultural validity of its language, *Kocharethi* is weighed down by the naming and interpolative functions of the dominant language in the process disempowering the subaltern's attempt to construct an identity.

For the subaltern interpolated in a dominant history, the very concept of history might bear the mark of an alien epistemology. But creating a narrative to historicize the tales of their ancestors 'Melorachan' and 'Keeyorathi' becomes a

contingency for the subaltern, as it is only the tales of their travel that mark the site of the tribe's cultural and linguistic property. If *Mavelimanrom* is marked by a struggle to control, to write the history of one's tribe, for which is needed the power of language, *Kocharethi* is a giving-in, a passive surrender to the larger history of the nation state. In postcolonial parlance to have a history is to have a legitimate existence and what the latter text denies itself is this legitimacy of being. Thus while in *Mavelimanrom* the subaltern is seen to wrest agency, to wrest speech, in *Kocharethi* the subaltern is deftly muted by the dominant discourse. The discourse of the colonial modernity and the nation state that one finds in *Kocharethi* co-opts the native and re-fashions him/her according to the norms of the dominant culture. Whereas the space of colonial modernity is treated as inviolable in *Kocharethi*, it is critiqued and subverted by the resisting subaltern in *Mavelimanrom*. This is made possible by eschewing the ideologically contaminated language of the colonizer. The idiom and syntax of the native language are appropriated by the native subaltern for self-determination in the face of the exigencies of the colonial rule.

The interpolated language of *Mavelimanrom* is charged with the subaltern's sense of belonging to his/her place while the language of *Kocharethi* betrays the powerlessness of its non-belonging. Reviving the *Manromin* the language is a re-appropriation of lost places, a refusal to be translated and transformed by colonial/national conception of space. If the conscious inscription of subaltern identity and place in language is what makes *Mavelimanrom* an interpolated historical narrative, it is the conceding of place, culture and language to the master narrative of the nation that makes

*Kocharethi* an appropriated discourse of translated subaltern identity. Subaltern translations of the lingo of the nation and nationalism thus become acts of cultural displacement. Claiming the nation in the language also means being claimed by the nation.

## References

- Baby, K J. (1991). **Mavelimanrom**. Thrissur: Current Books.
- Deleuze, Gilles and Guattari, Felix(1986). **Kafka: Towards a Minor Literature**. Trans. Dana Polan. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota.
- Lyotard, Jean-Francois (1991). **The Postmodern Explained to Children: Correspondence 1982-1985**. Pefanis, Julian & Thomas, Morgan (eds.) Sydney: Power Publications.
- Menon, A Sreedhara (1991). **A Survey of Kerala History**. Madras: S Viswanathan.
- Narayan, (1998). **Kocharethi**. Kottayam: DC Books.
- Partha Chatterjee (1993). **Nationalist Thought and the Colonial World: A Derivative Discourse**. London: Zed Books.



Spivak, Gayatri Chakravorty (1987). "*A Literary Representation of the Subaltern: Mahasweta Devi's 'Stanadayini'*," in **Subaltern Studies V: Writings on South Asian History and Society**. Guha, Ranaji. (ed.) Delhi: Oxford University Press.

Spivak, Gayatri Chakravorty (1988). "*Can the Subaltern Speak?*" in Nelson, Cary and Grossberg, Larry (eds.) **Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture**. Chicago: University of Illinois Press.

# TRANSLATION, TRANSMUTATION, TRANSFORMATION: A SHORT REFLECTION ON THE INDIAN *KALĀ* TRADITION

PRIYADARSHI PATNAIK

**Abstract:** This short paper wishes to look at the Indian tradition where a certain degree of interactivity and translatability (and transformability) existed among the various *kalās* like *nāṭya*, *gāna*, *chitra*, *vāstu*, *nritya* and so on. It seeks to point out that this was possible because of certain structural similarities among the *kalās*, and because of a common aesthetic goal that each strove to achieve, at least in theory. In that context, it briefly explores the notions of *tāla* (rhythm), *dosa* (defects) and *gunas* (percepts) as elements of structure common to different *kalās* and *bhāva* (aesthetic mood), *rasa* (aesthetic relish) as the goal of most of the *kalās*. It also looks at the *ragamāla* tradition both in music and painting to illustrate the above points. The postcoloniality of the exploration lies in the very desire to rethink the convention in terms of the notion of translation. In the end, it seeks to raise questions related to methodology in translating, transcreating or transgressing traditions in a postcolonial context

This reflection, in a sense, emerges out of my postcoloniality. I read most Indian texts in English and often reflect in English. While I write in English, I also write with an acute awareness of my delicate balance among many cultures - my English education, methodological training, and my desire to translate everything into everything else. Along with that I carry the burden of my 'otherness' both from my culture(s) and language(s) as well as the culture(s) of the language in which I write. If today, I try to understand translation, transmutation and transformation in the Indian tradition, it is so because of my post-coloniality (where, at least, I am free to talk about my colonial past) and my suppressed desire to show the superiority of my tradition through a language that I use with ambivalence. And through a concept, viz 'translation', which is alien to that tradition.

The *Visnudharmottara*, in a passage emphasizing the knowledge required to understand image-making, says:

*"Lord of men, he who does not know properly the rules of chitra can, by no means, be able to discern the characteristics of image ... without the knowledge of the art of dancing, the rules of painting are very difficult to be understood... The practice of dancing is difficult to be understood by one who is not acquainted with music. Without singing music cannot be understood".*

Talking of 'translation' in a post-colonial context, one always carries an awareness of translation as a mode of mastering the 'other', (language or culture), of understanding it,

and thus, of being in control of it. In talking of translation here, I do not have any of those connotations in mind. In fact, to a traditional mind, the passage above would not look like an attempt at 'translation', let alone 'cultural translation' or 'translation from one mode to the other.' However, my very attempt at understanding it from within my historical context is perhaps an attempt to master this tradition or at least come to terms with it as neither an outsider nor an insider, and thus, some kind of attempt at transcultural translation.

Yet the above passage is not mere theory, nor a paradigm. It is something practiced even today, at least by practitioners of dance and music (if not of traditional painting and sculpture). Most importantly, there are examples of not only such an understanding, but of practices based on such understandings rather than on realizations.

However, before I discuss them, I wish to point out that when I talk of 'translation' here it has to be understood in another tradition, bereft of the connotations of the politics of 'property', 'authenticity', 'faithfulness' or 'ownership' so pervasively associated with the word in its own context. For instance, in talking of translation today, one has to think of the author's consent (if he is alive) or permission to translate, which practice looks at the text to be translated as something which belongs to a particular person, involving questions of authority and authenticity. But the context which I am referring to often treats its texts as belonging to a tradition or culture rather than an individual, very often in a tradition of giving up or renouncing, and finally of transcendence. Much of Indian tradition is anonymous, not because methods of documentation did not exist (Which itself points to a lack of



need for it, or a socio-cultural structure that inhabited such developments), but because of a socio-cultural precept of renunciation. In an ethos where all *kalas* can lead one to *mokṣa* or transcendence, at a personal level many artists transcended ego and thus renounced their work. On the other hand, in such an ethos, even when traditions were handed down, under social pressure, as well as in a convention that discouraged such documentation, authorships got lost over time. The point I wish to make is that when one mode (say *nritya* taken from *kavya*) was incorporated into another, when one source was used in another context, the element of authorship in relation to use was not a sensitive issue. The other point that needs clarification here is how I understand and use 'translation'. I do not use it here in the specific sense of translating a 'text' from one language to another, from one culture to another. By translation, I mean translating from one 'mode' (or call it genre which is more culture- specific) to another. It is for this reason that I also use the terms 'transmutation' and 'transformation'. I wish to suggest that there is the possibility of 'translation' from one mode to another, which implies a one-to-one correspondence of signs in two different modes - say words and gestures, where a specific gesture might have equivalence to a specific word. There is 'transmutation' where a clear cut one to one correspondence of signs does not exist, but structural similarities are evident - for instance, as in the case of sentences and note clusters, which are expected to convey similar emotions in specific cultures. There is also 'transformation', where two different modes intend to evoke the same response and succeed in doing so by different modes. Most importantly, very often, in the Indian context of *kalas*, all the processes are simultaneously evident.

To begin with, there is the possibility of 'translation' from one mode into another, which implies a one-to-one correspondence of signs in two different modes – say, words and gestures, where a specific gesture might be equivalent to a specific word.

*Bāshikābhinaya* (*abhinaya* or expression through words) can be effortlessly 'translated' into *āṅgikābhinaya* (where gestures convey meaning). Since an elaborate repertoire of gestures exists,<sup>1</sup> one might go to the extent of claiming that a word-by-body translation is possible here. This is especially true in the context of stylized presentation (*natyadharmi*), which uses convention and general acceptance like written or spoken language. And this extends (to an extent) also to *chitra* and *vastu* where gestures can be represented, although sequence cannot be as systematically depicted as in dance.



*abhaya mudra* (reassurance)



*samapada sthanakam  
asana* (steadfastness)

There is 'transmutation' where a clear-cut correspondence of signs does not exist, but structural similarities are evident - for instance, as in the case of

sentences and note clusters that are expected to convey similar emotions in specific cultures. While music is not linked directly to the 'translation' of words or gestures, it is intrinsically linked to the core elements of *bhava* and *rasa*. Since different notes and clusters are associated with different *bhavas* and *rasas*, since fragments of poems are used, as well as *dosas*, *gunas* and *alankaras*, *sangeeta* (through structural similarities, though not through a one-to-one equation) can transmute another mode to evoke a certain mood.

At the core almost all aesthetic experience in our tradition lies in *bhava* and *rasa*, something that we will discuss briefly below. In order to achieve them through different *kalas*, the same theme can be either 'shown' in different ways (*kavya*, *nritya*, *kalā*) or are suggested (as in evoking the essence of a *kavya* through *gana*). Most importantly, very often, in the Indian context of *kalas*, all these processes are simultaneously evident.

This discussion is relevant in the contemporary context, perhaps because such an underlying unity is not so clearly discernible in the Western context. Hence, translating across modes - inter-semiotic translation - raises many uneasy questions. Here, I shall refer briefly to a paper on Chinese painting. The western author, in searching for 'progression' in the history of Chinese painting (he locates such a progression in the quest for realism in western art) finally ends up with the realization that one has to look at the history of Chinese painting as one looks at the history of the western book. What comes to light in the process, to my mind, is also the realization that the western approach to reading a book and

looking at a painting are perhaps distinctively different while they have a lot in common in the Chinese tradition.

Perhaps in a similar way to the Chinese, the relation between reading, viewing an image, seeing a dance performance and listening to music have some underlying common principle in the Indian context. It is this which makes the notion of 'translation' unnecessary and internalizes it so that one does not reflect upon it or theorize its difficulties. The element that holds all the *kalas* together and that makes transmutations and finally transformations so effortless and easy is the concept of '*bhava*' (tentatively translated as a 'composite of emotions and accompanying physiological states') and the unstated notion of '*rasa*'.

Perhaps some clarification is in order here. Bharata, in his opus *Natya Sastra*, discusses, among many things, *rasa*, and considers it the soul of the entire dramatic experience. Since, then, through the centuries, different aesthetic principles have been highlighted, viz. *alankaras* (figures of speech and sound), *riti* (styles), *vakrokti* (indirection) etc. However, by the 11<sup>th</sup> century *rasa* established itself as the most powerful and dominant aesthetic theory, chiefly in the context of *kavya*. However, its implications are far reaching, so that in all the *kalas*, it is accepted as the underlying intent and *bhava* figures prominently.

But what is *rasa*? Let us roughly translate it as 'aesthetic relish', as well as the state of mind that it generates in the person who relishes a *kala*. Its methodology is roughly that of the logic of emotion. What I wish to suggest is that a work of art, with the progression of time, generates a mood as



well as psycho-physiological state combining emotion and bodily reactions, and intensifies it. Let us call this *bhava*. When this process of experiencing becomes so intense that one forgets oneself, one's ego, one's awareness of space and time, loses himself/herself in the work, one relishes *rasa*. And whether one is talking about *vastu*, *chitra*, *nritya*, *gana* or *kavya*, this term - *bhava* - figures as the essential core to be communicated. (*Bhava* figures as a very important category in the seminal theoretical writings in each of the fields mentioned). And at the culminating point of the experience of *bhava* is the notion of *rasa*. In other words, the intent of all *kalas* is the same - to generate *bhava* and in the final count, stated or unstated, *rasa*.

Now, if *bhava* is the 'intention' of all the *kalas*, in the traditional context, then in terms of "structure" there are a number of elements all *kalas* share. A *Bharatanatyam* dancer I met pointed to *tala* (rhythm) as the core structural element common in all these forms.<sup>2</sup> It is true that when one refers to the tradition of *gandharva gana*, three things are highlighted, *pada* (verse), *tala* (rhythm) and *swara* (melody). *Kavya* also has rhythm or *chhanda*, and it is perhaps for this reason that different *talas* are bound to different textual compositions, especially in the *dhrupad* and *bhajan* traditions. Rhythm is important in *nritya* and in trying to capture movement in stasis it is, thus, important both in *chitra* and *vastu*. It is perhaps now that one can recall the verse cited above from *Visnudharmottara* and see the logic underlying it.

As I have pointed out elsewhere, at the centre of the *kala* tradition lays the notion of the narrative, of an oral or written text. This is another thing that holds the various *kalas*

together. I need not mention *kavya* and *nritya* here, which borrow heavily from *puranas*, *Bhagabāta* or the *mahakavyas*. Even in musical compositions, fragments from old stories are taken up to create the emotional context, the base, on which the *bhava* can develop. The same is also true of *chitra* or *vastu*.<sup>3</sup>

Another structural element, common to the various *kalas* is the notion of *dosas* (flaws) and *gunas* (good qualities). Whether one talks of *kavya*, *gana* or *chitra*, the flaws listed are to be avoided and the good qualities listed are to be encouraged. And finally, one must refer back to the *Nāṭya Śāstra*, from where these forms flow – from one common source – and hence across the ages, none of these forms forgets its link to the other.

Hence, it is not surprising to see the tradition of *rāgamāla* paintings evolve in the 16<sup>th</sup> century from an amalgam of Sanskrit, vernacular, and Persian influences, for the essence underlying the tradition continues. Here, I shall only make a few observations.

However, before that, I wish to question the notion of hierarchy that the quotation from *Vishnudharmottara* might have indicated. According to tradition, the *silpi* (the sculptor) meditates on the deity he is to make until he sees it clearly, as if in front of his own eyes. Then he translates it into material form (Coomaraswamy 1997). This is a tradition common to both Hinduism and Buddhism. *Sangitaratnākara* also encourages the tradition of meditating on the notes until they take divine forms. *Dhyānaslokas*, in Indian musical traditions,

are such verses that embody the music (image of the deity or the *rāga* or the *rāgini*) in words that weave images. *Sangita yogis*, meditating of the *nāda brahma*, making use of material, audible sounds, go into states of transcendence, where they are able to see the specific *rāga* embodied visually. They often put these down as words – *dhyānaslokas*. Thus, *dhyānaslokas* are texts that emerge in response to images, which emerge in response to sound. And, it is as if the *dhyānaslokas* have as much power to evoke the *bhāva* as the specified *raga*.



*Two examples of Raga Hindol (The Swing) from the Rāgamāla paintings. The second one has a dhyānasloka inscribed at the top.<sup>4</sup>*

The *rāgamāla* (garland of *rāgas*) paintings take their inspiration from such verses and try to evoke the same *bhāva*. They are the re-embodiment of the *dhyānasloka* in lines and colours. And progression is achieved since it is not a single picture but a series of pictures that one sees, woven like a garland. And like a garland, the structure eludes hierarchy, being without beginning and end, like the diurnal cycles of night and day, and over days, of changing seasons. Thus,

*rāgamāla* sung, is transformed (not translated) into *rāgamāla* seen. And the process is complete if both evoke the same *bhāvas* and culminate in the same *rasas*. Since the *rāgamāla* is supposed to evoke the seasons, it also transforms the world of their listener/viewer, evoking an entire cycle of year in a short span of time.

‘Translation,’ if at all the word is warranted here, must be understood in such a context. Even when talking of translating from one language into another within our culture, some of the above points might be pertinent. I have not talked here about *anuvāda* or *chaya*, since I lack competence in the field, but I have a feeling that some of the points made here may apply to them as well. But our task is also to codify the basic tenets and underlying principles of such a translation in a post-colonial context, to point out how it differs significantly from (the meaning of) ‘translation’ within our post-coloniality (which includes the memory of our coloniality as well as the practices it imbibed), to look at one tradition coloured by the other.

More importantly, one has to recognize the delicate nuances of the notion of translation in different cultures, respect their underlying philosophies, rather than use blanket terms sweepingly. In the context of inter-modal translation, the above illustrations suggest a methodology and also a totally different ideology as well as social contextualization of translation. For instance, when translating among Indian languages, should one look for consistency of style (*riti*), figures (*alankarā*) and take note of the *dosas* and *gunas*, and in the final count, *bhava* and *rasa*? Is it possible that some of



these tools can be used in the context of translating from an Indian language into English or from English into an Indian language?

Another important question that comes to mind is how, in a post-colonial context, the translation of ancient cultural texts is to be done – especially in the background of a tradition of Indological scholars having translated in certain ways. This is important since even contemporary Indologists use a method that is still colonial in its techniques and habits.

Similarly, at the level of the underlying socio-cultural ethos, ‘translation’ poses certain problems. For instance, can the Vedas be translated? On the other hand there is the tradition of the *Bhāgabhata*, which is the essence of the Vedas and the *Upanisads* for the common man (or so the tradition says). Would the process be called translation? Similarly, in regional traditions, many *Rāmāyanas*, *Mahābhāratas* and *Purānas* exist. Are they to be defined as translations? What underlying principles are used, say in *Rāmacharitamānasa*? In a tradition of sublimation, how is the author treated? How does *Rāmacharitamānasa* feel about *Vālmiki Rāmāyana* or *Kambarāmāyanas*? The notion of authorship and anonymity in the context of translation in our culture hold distinctive elements of problematization from a western perspective (within which we use ‘translation’) and need to be explored.

Finally, at the level of actual “translations” in our tradition (if at all they can be called so), the traditions, techniques and principles used need investigation. Perhaps, my

reflections above are some examples of that. However, a much more comprehensive and articulate exploration, especially in the context of post-colonial translation studies, is perhaps what is necessary.

## Notes

1. *Angikabinaya* (conveying meaning and emotions through gestures) includes the repertoire of codified body movements, positions of the body (*asana*), expressions of the face (*mukhaja*), movement of the upper and lower limbs (*cestas*), hands and finger (*mudra*). This tradition begins in *Natya Sastra*, and is to be found also in *Chitra* and *Silpa Sastras* along with texts of *Nritya*.
2. Discussion with Dr. Malati Agniswaran, teacher and practitioner of *Bharatnatyam* dance.
3. In the western context, both music and painting broke away from the narrative tradition, music by the Renaissance, and painting, by the 18<sup>th</sup> century. It is interesting to note that Western classical music broke away from the tradition of combining music and words (except in Opera), which was considered very important in *gandharva gana*, and even today is of utmost importance in the *Carnatic* tradition.
4. The basic idea conveyed by such verses is something to this effect: "He is seated in a golden swing, while a number of nymphs by whom he is surrounded, amuse him with music and keep time with the rocking of the swing on which he sits, insolently gazing on their charms, enjoying the

*sweets spontaneously offered to his shrine". Sourindra Mohan Tagore, Hindoo Music, p 82.*

## References

- Carrier, David (2002). "*Meditations on a Scroll or the Roots of Chinese Artistic Form*". *Word & Image*. Vol 18, Number 1.(np).
- Coomaraswamy, Ananda (1997). **The Dance of Shiva**. New Delhi: Munshiram Monoharlal.
- Kramrisch, Stella (1928). **The Vishnudharmottara**. Calcutta University Press
- Prajananda, Swami (1973) **Historical Development of Indian Music**. Calcutta: Firma KLM.
- Seminar on "*An Exploration of Rasa Aesthetic Bliss in the Context of Indian Art*", presented at "*Philosophy of Indian Education and Value Education*". Delhi, 7-9 February 2003.

# TRANSLATION: A CULTURAL SLIDE SHOW

B. HARIHARAN

***Abstract:** In this paper, I propose to look at translation from at least three perspectives: Translation as a personal enterprise, as a cultural enterprise with a social mission and translation as cartographing social demography or translation as public enterprise. It is obvious that we obtain here translated texts that are movements in cultural description that shape our living. The paper discusses the cultural implications of a book titled Into the World of Kutiyattam published by Natanakairali in Kerala, and explores the articulation of public space where translation takes place in a significant way, in particular, Mananchira Square in Calicut city. It is imperative to recognize these sites as cultural texts if we are to arrive at a description of the cultural matrix that we help to translate every instant. Rather than limit the idea of translation, this paper proposes to extend and push the implications of the term to different sites in my cultural experience.*

## Introduction

Translation, Translation Studies, and translation theories are variously involved in the shaping of cultural discourses. It is a general practice to recognize the original text and the translated text in translation theory, wherein what is



called the 'text' is invariably made of words. Much the same is true when one translates from one language into another. Writing his introduction to his book, *Rethinking Translation*, Lawrence Venuti (Venuti 1992) draws attention to a number of questions that concern the translator and translation. He writes, "To be a 'leading' translator today is not only to produce translations that are highly accomplished, favourably reviewed, and award-winning, but it also means sheer quantity, executing numerous projects, practicing translation as a steady if meager source of income, gaining an economic advantage over other translators in the competition for foreign texts and the negotiation of fees"(Venuti1992:1). He also laments the fact that translators are not "critically self-conscious writers who develop an acute awareness of the cultural and social conditions of their work" (ibid:1). It is obvious here that the reference is to literary texts for the questions he addresses and the discussions available on translation are invariably on the attendant problems, challenges, and issues relating to literary texts.

For my purposes, I wish to understand 'translation' not merely in linguistic terms, caught invariably in the binary of the original and translated text. I use the word 'text' not just in literary terms, as, say, a poem written by K.G. Sankara Pillai in Malayalam that is translated into English or some other language. A dream, or an orthodox tradition handed down from generation to generation in a text may also be translated with an 'acute' awareness of the cultural and social conditions, an awareness that is free of the limitations of binarism. Again, the city, for instance, is a text for me subject to translation. I will be using these two terms in a flexible manner to facilitate

discussion of issues. I shall also look at the possible impact of translation on texts.

For didactic purposes the paper is divided into three parts so as to address three specific aspects of translation. They are:

- (a) Translation as a personal enterprise
- (b) Translation as a cultural enterprise with a social mission
- (c) Translation as cartographing social demography or translation as a public enterprise.

## I

The paper is an exposition of my personal experience with a remarkable institution in Kerala. In Irinjalakuda in Kerala, there is a Research and Performing Centre for Traditional Arts called Natanakairali, which houses a Gurukulam that trains students in the hoary and ancient Sanskrit theatre called *Kutiyattam*. This is one of the oldest, living and surviving forms of theatre in the world. As part of the Documentation of Kutiyattam Series, the director of Natanakairali G. Venu was bringing out his memoirs in Malayalam and English and wrote to me asking whether I would translate the manuscript from Malayalam into English, a suggestion to which I promptly agreed. As I was translating the manuscript, there were some questions I had on the reason for such an enterprise and my role in the project.

For me, the project was not merely the change of the linguistic script from Malayalam to English. As I was aware of

the kind of activities and programmes of Natanakairali, I saw the translation was more for the promotion of the art form at an international level. It was also a tribute to the living legend in *Kutiyattam*, Guru Ammannur Madhava Chakyar. The job of the translator at this point was to market culture to a larger and diverse audience. For me as a boy, *Kutiyattam* figured in a popular Malayalam song, in the magnificent paint that described the face of the character, and in the dim awareness that it is an art form performed in the *koothambalam* of the temple as part of a ritual. I had not seen any live performance until I started my teaching career. There is a popular view that *Kutiyattam* is difficult to understand. What is even more curious is that the State Government has done little to recognize the value of this heritage. Nor has it acknowledged Guru Ammannur's contribution to theatre.

It was in this context that the importance of the translation assumed significance for me. It is true that subsequent Governments in Kerala have promoted tourism with their catchy slogan, aggressively marketing cultural packages for tourists. With their bonsai versions of *Kathakali* and *Theyyam*, the department of tourism was always going global. The translation project was, in this context, an attempt from the grass root level to consolidate further the work at Natanakairali. However, translation as a cultural enterprise came under scrutiny as the work progressed. For, the question that popped up most was whether translation transforms culture into commodity. The tourism department had effected their translation of other art forms for immediate un-reflexive consumption. Here was the danger of translation becoming mutilation, striking at the form and language of the art form.

It is important to be aware that translations do become saleable products, especially when there is an agreement with the publisher. And as with any other book, the publishing industry has an important stake in the case of translations, more so because they effect a further transition of the book into cultural expression, into commodity. It is clear that the conditions that are instrumental in any translation project like the involvement of the publisher, the choice of the text, the culture, the language of the text, the reputation of the author, and of the translator, and so on, decide the circulation of the finished product and with that the economics and marketability of this cultural dissemination. In the present case, the book was to be brought out by Natanakairali as part of its larger attempt at documentation and with a specific target audience. Though the commodification of books in the present distribution system is inevitable, though the sale of this book may be networked with the publications industry, the inevitable nexus between translation and commodification has to be addressed earnestly.

I would now like to touch briefly upon one other translation done for Natanakairali on the hand gestures in *Kathakali*. Translation generally involves printed texts that form the original for the intervention of the translator into another language. But when it comes to a proto-lingual text, how does one discuss the process of translation? What is the experience when one translates proto-languages? G. Venu had written down in Malayalam notations for some gestures in *Kathakali* that had to be translated into English. But then for many of the hand gestures, he would show them and I had to translate all the gestures into English on the spot. I have no training whatsoever in *Kathakali* or other art forms and I was



aware that what I was seeing was the result of years of training and research in the field.

The question of cultural production for mass consumption did not arise in this translation. This was partly the elaboration of his earlier publication in Malayalam. I realized then that translation does not always involve written texts, that what one generally understands as text needs to be revised. Equally important was the awareness that Venu's book *The Language of Kathakali* is incidentally made available in English, and that the experience and emotion communicated through hand gestures are beyond the printed word in translation. The lack of narrative, or a coherent story line and the technicality of the printed text seem to point here to a rather utilitarian function for the translator and translation.

## II

A translation can reveal other translated intentions. This was an insight I gained as I read G. Venu's manuscript with the idea of translating it in mind. A translation need not always be an act of negotiation with or intervening in a text to re-create and rewrite it in a different language. It could be manifest as a cultural enterprise with a social bearing. Such flexibility in the usage helps locate the idea of translation at the level of social commitment. In *Into the World of Kutiyattam* (Venu 2002), Venu narrates the establishment of a kalari by Chachu Chakyar: "Chachu Chakyar wished fervently to see Koothu and Kutiyattam triumph over time. Impelled by this desire he organized a Kutiyattam Kalari (Training centre) in his own household. He relied entirely on his own modest means of maintaining it" (Venu 2002:38). In 1982 with the

help of Sangeet Natak Akademi, a Gurukulam was established in Venu's rented house. The future of this theatre seemed very bleak as recently as the 1970's. That Venu's translation of the result of a training programme he could only imagine after witnessing Ammannur's performance speaks of a cultural consciousness necessary for every translator: "It became my life's dream to mould a young generation of artistes trained in this art by imparting the same rigorous training received by Ammannur"(ibid:17).

The Kalari started by Chachu Chakyar was being used then as living quarters. The Gurukulam emerged as a translation of a dream Chachu Chakyar had. This is an important development in the history of *Kutiyattam*, especially with the orthodox Chakyar families, as the art form was traditionally handed down from generation to generation within the family. The Gurukulam translated Chachu Chakyar's wish to "*triumph over time*" in the new school where training is given to non-Chakyars. It is also to be mentioned that the Kerala Kalamandalam has a *Kutiyattam* department; the Margi School in Trivandrum also trains aspirants in this theatre.

There are far reaching cultural implications here, for only Chakyars are permitted to perform inside the *Koothambalam* in temples. There was an outcry when Venu had his *Arangettam* in Trivandrum in the 1984 *Kutiyattam* festival. Generally, *Kutiyattam* is performed only in the *Koothambalam*. Writes Venu, "With a lot of heartache Madhava Chakyar and myself decided to have the next *Kutiyattam* festival in a convenient place outside the temple which could attract all lovers of art"(ibid:61). The Gurukulam has trained the younger generation and has festivals every year

at Natanakairali so that they get good stage exposure. The younger generation has now performed in a number of countries, perhaps making what was once confined to the *Koothambalam* an intense art form amenable to translation across cultures. Translation, in this sense, becomes transformation of an entire way of life of the Chakyar family as well as the theatre.

What distinguishes this clearly from the bonsaification of art is that this theatre experience is not opted into market economics, focused as it is on the continuation of a theatre tradition that was highly stylized and yet intensely emotional. So, at the Festival of India in London, at the Riverside Studio, London, Guru Ammannur's troupe performed *Balivadham*.



What is unique about this production is that Bali's death scene is done elaborately. The theatre director suggested that, "Such an elaborate enactment of death scene will never be appreciated by our audience. It will be better if you reduce its duration"(ibid:31). But Guru Ammannur who did the role of Bali did not comply. "The theatre director could not believe"

what he saw; the packed audience sat with bated breath till the end of the death scene" (ibid:31). Kenneth Rae of *The Guardian* wrote: "...one of the bravest and most outrageous pieces of acting I have ever seen. Who else would dare take 15 minutes to die on stage, and get away with it?"(ibid:31).



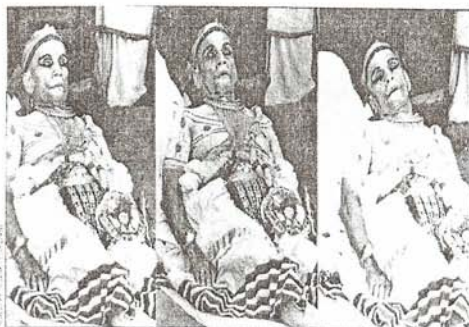
The translation of a family tradition into a communal heritage and the recognition of a need to preserve and promote art are underscored here. It is the same impetus seen in the staging of *Ashokavanikangam* and *Jatayuvadham* after a very long time. The impetus goes back to the school which was started in 1982. There is at once a translation of performance and translation of training in the arts here.

This can be illustrated with the most recent body of translation to have appeared on the stage. It is surprising that until 2001 Kalidasa's *Sakuntalam* was never staged in *Kutiyattam*. There were two different stage manuals for two different acts in the play. But no complete play was staged spread over twelve hours for four days from January 5 - 8, 2002. If the popularity of *Sakuntalam Kutiyattam* is gauged, it is suggestive of the cultural consciousness that augments the training and performance giving direction to the translation



that charts the course of this theatre. With the performance of Kalidasa's play, a border was crossed.

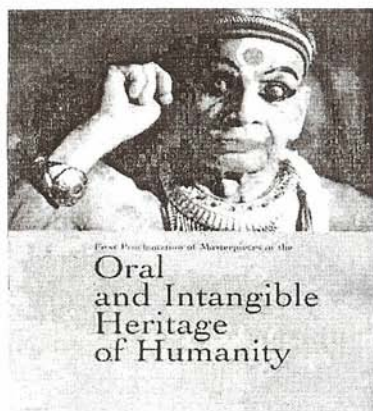
In a sense, translation is a form of border crossing. A quick look at the World Theatre Project that also involves the Gurukulam, and Natanakairali in this theatre experiment might help. It must be said that though the cultural continuation of *Kutiyattam* was maintained in the translation of family tradition and temple ritual, theatre experience is certainly translated into the dynamics of globalization. In 1998-99, the World Theatre Workshop was held at Natanakairali, Irinjalakuda.



Interestingly Guru Ammannur was very active in training the participants in the workshop. The idea that came of it was to "facilitate an opportunity for theatre artistes from different backgrounds to work together aiming at a production as an experiment and as part of the experience to understand each other"(102). They had an improvised production in Sweden in 1999 called "*East of the Sun, West of the Moon*" which was based on a classic Chinese text "*Journey to the West*". The World Theatre Project may not be the old story of the East meeting the West; it is the continuation of the ongoing

translation of the experience of theatre that had come near extinction without anyone to continue the tradition of the training available in the *Abhinaya Kalari* (training laboratory) at the Kodungallor Palace inherited by the Ammannur Chakyars. As part of this ongoing translation, was set up an *Abhinaya Kalari* funded by the Japanese Foundation Asia Centre. The fact that this continual cultural translation had made a mark in the preservation and promotion of *Kutiyattam* is well borne out in the recognition that the UNESCO gave it in May 2001.

### *Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity*



### III

I now propose to look at a third dimension of the phenomenon of translation. Since I do not confine the term 'translation' to the printed word, I shall be looking at an area

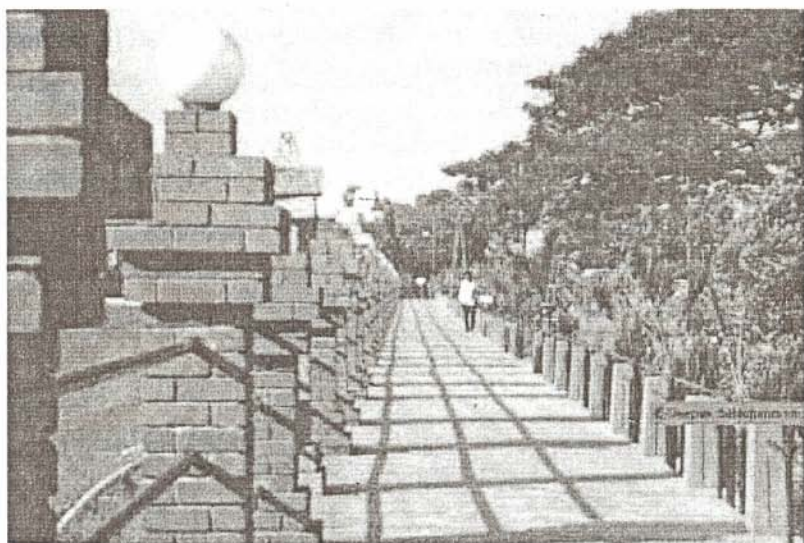
that concerns the urban geographer. The city is a cultural text. My attempt here is to look at the ways in which city spaces are translated to serve different purposes. With this, of course, are changed life styles of people. Once familiar, landmarks, names, leisure, hobbies, speak in a different tongue. Everything a city has speaks in a different tongue. Here 'translation' pushes the cultural limits of experience in the transcreation of the city as a different experience.

**Calicut City:** Mananchira is a large pond in the heart of the city of Calicut. It was the bathing tank of the members of the Zamorin's household.



As the city grew, there were changes in the cityscape and Mananchira became the heart of the city. Today, the heart of the city is trans-created into a beautiful park called Mananchira Square. It was thrown open to the public in

November 1994. The Tagore and Ansari Park separated from the pond by a road on one side, and on the south of it, the maidan (ground) separated by a road defined the site as an identifiable landmark. Now all these are fused, walled in, and renamed as Mananchira Square.



The description of this text will be incomplete without some additional details: The Square has two statues, one of V.K. Krishna Menon and another one called *Padayali*. New trees have been planted all around, and there are two entrances, one across the *Pattala palli* (military mosque) and the other across from the commonwealth factory, both designed to reminisce the Huzur Kacheri building (which was the head quarters of the East India Company and later of the Malabar Presidency) which was demolished to be replaced by the new mammoth LIC building. The exit is across the model school/old law college junction built in a similar style (tiled



roof, white/peach colonial walls, a typical Keralite touch). (Thyagarajan's *Mananchira Square*). There is a musical fountain at the north end of the Square, and an open-air theatre Kalakrithi, a music stage and concealed speakers.



This was called Mananchira Junction. There were annual fairs during the Onam festival, and arts competitions. Indira Gandhi, C.H. Mohammed Koya, Muhammad Ali, Swami Chinmayananda and K.P. Kesava Menon, to name a few, addressed people here. Memories linger in the mind of Sunday cricket matches, football practice, P.T.Usha running her 100 meters apart from her training on the beach, and Gundappa R Viswanath the cricketer hitting a huge six into the sub collectorate building. Even more was the first steps into the world of football, the ground nurturing many a football dream, not just for the city but also for the whole district. The busy centre with buses competing with one another also had in

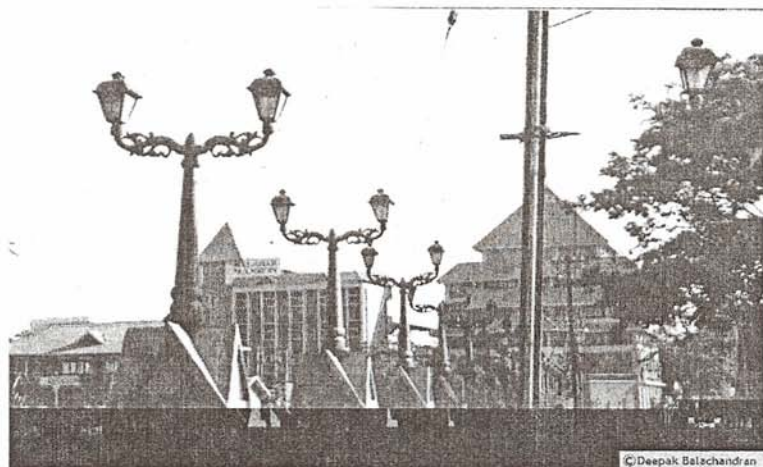
their midst the wood barrel water cart carrying water to restaurants.

It is always possible to be nostalgic about familiar landmarks, but the point I want to make is the way in which the cartography of the city changed with this 700-lakh rupees project. The translation, as trans-creation, redefined leisure for the city dweller. The ground and the musical fountain compete with the beach in attracting people. In this sense, translation alters social behaviour; here is clearly the postmodern expression of the city.



A closer look at the square reveals some other interesting details. "The maidanam has now a green carpet lawn and the whole complex is circled by a laterite (a kind of stone) sculpted wall. The entire complex is circled by 250 lamp posts that are designed in the colonial style and each post will have a pair of lamps." ("Mananchira Square") The lamps were specially cast in North India and are mounted on the laterite wall encircling the pond. One feature of this sort of

trans-creation is the expression of postmodernism in the design of the city. For one important feature of postmodern architecture is the focus on appearance over substance and purpose. Added to that is a deliberate mixing of diverse features.



This sort of 'trans-creation' manifests in the new building of the public library. What used to be in my student days a tile-roofed building open for the 'intellectuals' of the city now attracts the middle class and is said to have a larger and wider readership. It is now a multi-purpose building with shops let out in the ground floor, translating space into money as much as leisure and knowledge share the upper rooms. The library building has a structure that is aesthetically pleasing where another dimension of translation manifest itself. Translation of cityscapes brings together styles and references from different periods to create a discourse that draws attention to the way aesthetic refinement is structured. The building has drawn heavily on Laurie Baker and on traditional Kerala



architecture. Added to that is the exposed laterite that seems to aggressively draw attention to itself.

I would like to draw the reader's attention to one more important structure that has altered the city in a significant way, but before that, let's recall the structure of the temples in Kerala, especially the Vadakkumnathan Temple in Trichur. One should notice the roof that slopes down. Now if we turn our attention to the Planetarium in Calicut, located to the East Mananchira, one notices that it is modeled very much on the architecture of the temple.



The design of the temple, I would argue, is translated to construct a temple for science. There is a lot of semantic transfer in this translation. This is probably the only planetarium of its kind in the country, which seems to thematically draw attention to science enshrined in a temple.



This dimension of translation in the public sphere possibly manifests best the change in a people and culture. Only a fuller study of translation in the public sphere will enable an understanding of the cultural discourses that condition the trans-creation of space. A salient point to emerge here is the relation between the consequence of translation and the location of leisure. These trans-creations in the cityscape, however, are neither isolated discourses nor are they closed off to further trans-creations. Similar translations continue to function in the major festivals in the State, in the domestic sphere altering the shape of living. For instance, there are oblique references to the Mananchira Square and the beautification project in a very politically charged Malayalam movie. In a sense, leisure and with that the public is made to confront the politics of translation here.

## Conclusion

Every slide show must end. But translation goes on. In the re-creation of texts in different languages, spaces, situations, memories, newer paradigms, ideologies, politics, are created, subject always to further translation. It is almost Ovidian as texts pull off magnificent changes. And yet, these changes are contextualised, framed well within the cultural space that makes possible the impetus to translate. The effect that a translation has is as important in any theorizing on translation as the problems the translator faces.

## References

Thyagarajan, Subramanian **Mananchira Square.**

www.2.cs.cmu.edu/cgi-  
bin/finger?tsubram@unix.cc.emory.edu

Venu, G. (2000). **The Language of Kathakali**. Dance  
Notation Series, no.2. Irinjalakuda: Natanakairali.

----, (2002). **Into the World of Kutiyattam with the  
Legendary Ammannur Madhava Chakyar**.  
Irinjalakuda: Natanakairali.

Venuti, Lawrence (ed) (1992). **Rethinking Translation:  
Discourse, Subjectivity, Ideology**. London and New  
York: Routledge.

### Acknowledgements

- [www.calicutnet.com/calicut/\\_photogallery/mananchira\\_square.html](http://www.calicutnet.com/calicut/_photogallery/mananchira_square.html)
- [www.calicutnet.com/calicut/\\_photogallery/planetarium.html](http://www.calicutnet.com/calicut/_photogallery/planetarium.html) for the photographs on Mananchira.
- Venu.G for Photos on Kutiyattam for the book into the World of Kutiyattam

# THE HIDDEN RHYTHMS AND TENSIONS OF THE SUBTEXT: THE PROBLEMS OF CULTURAL TRANSFERENCE IN TRANSLATION

TUTUN MUKHERJEE

*Abstract: The theories of translation prevalent in the West in the earlier centuries derived largely from Platonism. Critics in the twentieth century invoked the hermeneutical tradition of the great German Romantics and stressed that language was not instrumental in communicating meaning, but was constitutive in reconstructing it. Linguists emphasized the possibility of translation equivalence through the readability of linguistic features, levels and categories as well as a potentially infinite series of cultural situations. Culturally sensitive research in the 1990s suspected "universal meanings" and "transparent translations" and indicated the existence of subliminal social-historical differences underlying all processes of interpretation, including translation. The theoretical focus called upon attention to the illusions of "transparent language" and fluent (seamless) translations. The functions of both the translator and the praxis of translation changed. The translator*

*became the critical reader-analyst of the text and the process of translation grew sensitive to the sub-textual determinations of ethnicity and race, gender and sexuality, class and nation. The translator as an analyst was alert to the rhetorical play in the use of the language. Three different kinds of texts are offered as examples of three types of translation process to illustrate the problems of cultural transference in translation.*

*"...The origin of philosophy is translation or the thesis of translatability."*

- Jacques Derrida

One of the many significant achievements of the twentieth century has been the coming of age of new disciplines of learning, among which Translation Studies occupies a prominent place.

After centuries of incidental and desultory attention from linguists and literary scholars, the subject of translation has moved to the centre-stage from the periphery by attracting increasing research interest. The Second World War marked a turning point in its reception in the academies.

Through the succeeding years, the progressively growing interest has drawn scholars from adjacent fields of linguistics, literary studies, logic, sociology, anthropology, as well as from mathematics, information technology and media studies, who have brought into the discussion of translation new models and terminology, paradigms and methodologies towards the formulation of the different theories of translation.



Having run the entire gamut of experimentation rather in the manner of the 'evolution of cosmos' - with ontogenic terms such as *the art, the craft, the theory/principles/fundamentals, the science*, and with epistemological metaphors such as *bridge, treachery, interpretation, invasion, even excavation, cannibalization, and parricide*, the accepted nomenclature is now taken unequivocally to be: *Translation Studies*. The vastness envisioned by the name indicates the dialectical richness of the subject.

The changing cultural philosophy of the world finds remarkable parallels in the paradigm shifts in Translation Studies. Developing out of the legacy of Western theories of translation of earlier times, an ambitious array of conceptual exercises and analysis of texts has been offered through the past century by theorists and translators of varying orientations, persuasions and ideologies. As a result, various methodologies and norms are now enunciated across cultures. Today, the translation theorist is aware of the full, inclusive and complex body of axioms, postulates, hypotheses, and methods that form the theoretical foundation for the praxis of translation.

Enriched by the research input, the 1990s have seen Translation Studies achieve certain institutional authority, manifested most tangibly by the popular reception of translated texts across the world and the proliferation of translator training programmes and scholarly publishing. In keeping with the historical signposts of the time, the theories of 1990s have also stepped beyond the problematics of semiosis towards "depth" analyses. Now, the process of translation does not

merely concern itself with the question of crossing languages, "re-coding" or carrying across meanings. The scope of its engagement has enlarged to encompass social and cultural nuances.

## II

The theories of translation prevalent in the West in the earlier centuries derived largely from, as Antoine Berman puts it, the *"figure of translation based on Greek thought"* or more precisely, Platonism. Diachronically, this means that *"the figure of translation"* is understood here as the form in which translation is deployed and appears to itself, before any explicit theory. Berman explains the way Western translation has been *"embellishing restitution of meaning based on the typically Platonic separation between spirit and letter, sense and word, content and form, the sensible and the non-sensible"*. (Burman 2000:296). This viewpoint is responsible for valorising "restitution of meaning" over the examination of the function of the "word" in the *performance of translation*.

It would be appropriate here to re-open the discussions offered by theorists such as George Steiner, G. Mounin, and J.C. Catford. Invoking the hermeneutical tradition of the great German Romantics like Schleiermacher, Steiner has stressed that language is not instrumental in merely communicating meaning, but is constitutive in reconstructing it. He argues that the individualistic aspects of language and the privacies of particular usage resist universalising norms of translation. He says, *Great translations must carry with it the most precise sense possible of the resistant, of the barriers intact at the heart of understanding*. I shall relate these aspects of the

"resistant" and the "barriers" to my discussion of specific texts below. Here, I wish to place alongside Steiner, the positions held by linguists like Mounin and Catford who emphasize the possibility of translation equivalence through the readability of linguistic features, levels and categories as well as a potentially infinite series of cultural situations. Theories such as these have released what Herbert Marcuse calls "the power of negative thinking" against all "one dimensional" theories of reality (*Marcuse 1964:11*).

Culturally sensitive research in the 1990s suspects "universal meanings" and "transparent translations" and indicates the existence of subliminal social-historical differences that underlie all processes of interpretation, including translation. The theoretical focus has therefore moved away from the earlier mimetic philosophies and in the light of Post-Structuralism, calls attention to the exclusions and hierarchies that are masked by the accepted realism-oriented illusions of "transparent language" and fluent (seamless) translations that seem "un-translated". The functions of both the translator and the praxis of translation have changed. As the translator becomes the critical reader-analyst of the text, it is required that the process of translation becomes sensitive to the sub-textual determinations of ethnicity and race, gender and sexuality, class and nation. The translator as analyst must be alert to the rhetorical play in the use of language and thus the "re-production" of the translated text must move beyond mere transference of linguistic equivalence to encompass political inscription.



According to Gideon Toury, *However highly one may think of Linguistics, Text Linguistics, Contrastive Textology or Pragmatics, and of their explanatory power with respect to trans-national phenomena, being a translator can not be reduced to the mere generation of utterances which may be considered 'translations' within any of these disciplines. Translation activities should rather be regarded as having cultural significance. Consequently, 'translatorship' amounts first and foremost to being able to play a social role, i.e., to fulfil a function allotted by a community - to the activity, its practitioners, and/or their products - in a way which is deemed appropriate in its own terms of reference.* (Toury 1980:198) (emphasis mine).

Clifford Geertz, one of our best contemporary anthropologists declared once that *there simply is no such thing as human nature independent of culture. We are... incomplete or unfinished animals who complete or finish ourselves through culture - and not through culture in general but through highly particular forms of it.* (Geertz 1973:49). Human language is, therefore, neither universal nor individual but each language is rooted in a specific culture as dialects or as national languages. The individual self becomes a medium for the culture and its language. The creative self mediates the linguistic and social construction of reality, the interpretation and negotiation of the meaning of the lived world. Some philosophers of language of the post-modern ethos have gone so far as to let "reality" disappear behind an "inventive language" that disassembles it [for instance, Derrida's observation in 1986 in a memorial address to Paul de Man where he described the interpretation of "essentialist" categories such as 'childhood', 'history', 'generations',



'regions', 'gender', 'woman' etc as "inventions" to illustrate the cultural "constructedness" of communications.]

To stress such directions in translation is to argue that, from the standpoint of the analysis of the cultural situation or the contextual placing of the text - an analysis that might be termed political, certain purposes are productively served. The literary work contains a hidden dimension, an underlying text, where certain signifiers correspond and link up, forming all sorts of networks beneath the surface of the text itself - the manifest text, presented for reading. For a postcolonial society of many languages and classes like ours, this draws attention to the self-reflexive element in the text that must be addressed by translation. It alerts us to the existence of the "deep structures" of communication that need to be explored.

Transference is the process of conveying or projecting onto someone the available knowledge or information. The concept of 'transference' as developed through Freud by Derrida and Lacan suggests the dual process of passing thoughts, feelings, motivations, and conflicts to the "therapist" or what Jacques Lacan calls the "Subject Supposed to Know", the person who is capable of illuminating the "truth" of knowledge better than "patient" alone. But only by refusing the role of the "Subject Supposed to Know" and by initiating a sort of "counter-transference" does the analyst help the patient grow beyond the analyst (so that the therapist and the patient do not become locked in an enduring false relationship). Transference, as Lacan and Derrida both point out, occurs in many contexts outside of psychotherapy. Lacan claims that

whenever a person (teacher, friend, priest, military leader) is believed to be the Subject-Supposed-to-Know, transference exists. Likewise, transference is something that can happen to texts, to "authors", as well as to people. Transference operates through the dynamics of languages, in internal as well as external communication. However, not to become locked in the prison house of language and the metaphysics of a unified consciousness in control of languages, is to be aware of the *fictions* in the structuring of language. As far as the process of translation is concerned, then, it would mean the possibility of "counter-transference" always already existing in the text or which has to be initiated by the translator/analyst.

I offer a few examples here to illustrate the problems of cultural transference in translation. Let us read an extract from a memorable poem by the legendary Jibanananda Das, one of the great poets of post-Tagore Bengal:

### Transliteration:

#### Bonolata Sen (1942)

*Hajaar bocchor dhorey aami pawth haatitechhi prithibeer pawthey  
Singhal samudro thekey nisheether awndhokarey maloy sagorey  
Awnek ghurechhi aami; Bimbissar Ashoker dhusar jogotey  
Sekhaney chhilam aami; aaro door awndhokarey Bidharbho nagarey;  
Aami klanto pran ek, chari dikey jiboner samudro sawfen  
Aamarey du dawndo shanti diyechhilo Natorer Banalata Sen.*

*Chool taar kawbejkaar awndhokaar Bideeshar nishaa,  
Mukh taar Srabostir karukarjo; oti door samudrer por  
Haal bhengey je nabik hariyechhe dishaa  
Sabuj ghaaser desh jakhon se chhokhey dekhey daruchini-dwiper  
bhitor,*

*Temoni dekhechhi taarey awndhokarey; bolechhey se, 'eto din kothay  
chhilen'?*

*Pakhir neerrer moto chokh tuley Natorer Banalata Sen ...*

Reading the poem even without any knowledge of the source language still conveys the sense of the overwhelming vowel play that governs the slow pace and rhythm of the lines. The form matches the exhaustion and the timelessness of memory that the poem presents. While the *iconic* mode of translation that aims at geometrical resemblance in terms of structure, line, length and so on, might prove helpful to come close to the spirit of the poem, only the knowledge of the SL will enable the transference of the "deep structures" from the source text to the target text so that the "construction" of the "surface structures" would be possible. It would then be possible to address the poet's references to history, his extraordinary use of tropes and the coalescence of imagery.

### **Translation of the second verse:**

#### **Version 1:**

*...Her hair was the darkness of Vidisha's night  
from a past of forgotten time,  
her face was the handicraft of Sravasti.  
When drifting on some far sea aboard a ship  
with a broken rudder  
a sailor suddenly sees a region of green grass on some  
cardamom island  
like that I saw her in the dark. And*

*raising eyes that were like a bird's nest,  
 Banalata Sen of Nator said, 'where were you  
 All this while?'*

(trans: Buddhadev Bose)

## Version 2:

*... Her hair like dark Vidisha's night of long before  
 her face Sravasti artistry when on the ocean far distant  
 the sailor who had broken his rudder and lost direction saw  
 nothing but the land of green grass within the cinnamon island  
 so I saw her in the dark; she said, 'where were you  
 all these days then?' raising her bird's nest-like eyes at me  
 Nator's Banalata Sen*

(trans.: Ananda Lal)

Would it help to choose between the two versions? I would say, no; either of them may be taken as adequate and neither of them is entirely satisfactory. That this should be so is extremely important because this acknowledges the residue always left in the text after every translation, which encourages a new translation. In this case, though the lyrical voice of the poet does not pose many difficulties in transference, the poem alerts the reader to the poem's dialectic of selfhood. History shapes selves and the poetic self in the poem partakes of many historical epochs. However, it is a mistake to imagine the poetic self as a simple, random, constantly changing historical phenomenon or an infinitely changing collection of voices through history. Though the poetic self seems amorphous and fluid, clearly it is not a passive vehicle animated by ceaselessly changing social discourse. Something within its organization



of memory prompts the self to identify with certain forms and experiences and not others. Its ceaseless mobility finds (there is the iteration of the act of "seeing") momentary rest - the moment of timelessness in the troubled flux of time - in the empathic presence of the beloved: her eyes like "a bird's nest" and her presence a catalyst for the remembrance of things past in the time present. Let me attempt yet another version with these points in mind:

### Version 3:

*...Her hair the ancient darkness of a Vidisha night  
her face a Sravasti artwork. As when in the far distant ocean  
the rudderless sailor who had lost his way  
sees before his eyes a green expanse within a cinnamon isle,  
I saw her in the darkness; she said, 'So long ... where have you  
been?'*

*Raising her eyes like a bird's nest, Nator's Bonolata Sen.*

(trans: mine)

The iconic mode, however, would certainly not be appropriate for a poem written by, say a Dalit poet. Inspired by the spirit of Unnava's revolutionary novel, *Mala Palli* in early twentieth century and especially by the work of the Dalit poet Gurram Joshua, as for example his *Gabbilam*, the Dalits began "forging" a language to articulate their personal sagas of pain, discrimination, deprivation and indignity. Their language does not wholly derive from conventional usage, but is "crafted" with distinct words, images, rhythms to express the specificity of their experience of alterity / "untouchability" that might truly be illustrative of the "vernacular" language, or linguistic usage

that emerges out of the grid of "verna". A poem like the following, by a powerful young poet Sikhamani, for instance, would need attention to the *indexical* connotation of the text. The indexical text is embedded in a locale, in a context, refers to it, even signifies it and would not make much sense without it. Sikhamani is the pen name of Dr. K. Sanjeeva Rao whose slim volume of poems is titled *Black Rainbow* as a reminder of the history of the Dalit movement and draws attention to the motivations of the Dalit people.

### Transliteration: (an extract)

#### *Kirru Chappula Bhasha*

*Inni varnanatmaka bhashallo  
na avarnanni  
barninchakal bhasha ledu.  
Inni soundaryamatka varnanllo  
na asaundayanni wodisi  
pattukuney aksharam ledu.*

*Innarllu nenuka dhyanini  
Anukaruna sabdalni matramey  
Aravu techchukurna apsawarula Madhya  
Na asalu swaranni pagottokunna nu ...*

*Ippuda aksharalu puttedi  
Shivunicheti dharmaruka sabdamunuchchi kadu  
Veerabahuni kirrucheppula cheppula nundi  
Ippudu varnamala savarnala chetula  
Rudrakshamala kadu  
Goodem gudisey mundu*

*pachchi orugula dandem,  
Ippudu manvu wontimeedi dandem.  
Na nallajati cheppuka  
Tellani lesu allika ...*

## Translation:

### The Language of Creaking Footwear

*Among all these descriptive  
languages  
there isn't one that can describe my  
castelessness / colourlessness.*

*Among these chapters of purple prose  
there isn't a word  
that can captivate  
my lack of beauty ...*

*I have made the word a coal  
and lit my dark kiln.*

*I have made the word a transparent crystal  
to carry in my barber's bag.*

*I have seasoned it like  
a cashew nut to sign on  
the nation -cloth as a washer man.*

*I have now made the word  
a boat lamp to guard the fishnet  
before pressing it into the dark river.*

*The word has become a spark  
to fan my potter's flame.  
I am plying the loom  
making the word its lever ...*

*Now words are not born  
out of the drum beat of Shiva  
but from the creaking  
language of Veerabahu's footwear.  
The string of alphabet*

*Is not the chain of beads  
of the upper caste  
but of dry fish  
in front of a hut in a hamlet.  
The sacred thread of Manu  
is now the beautiful thread work of my community ...*  
(trans: Kiranmayi)

In spite of a commendable attempt by the translator, the "barriers" at the heart of the SL text remain intact, having successfully resisted translation. The "deep structures" do not govern the surface structures and the subliminal emotions of the original poem are not manifest in translation. The blame is not entirely the translator's; the inadequacy of English as a target language to convey the nuances of the "vernacular" is a factor in cultural loss. As far as the initiative of the translator is concerned, perhaps a more radical usage could have been



attempted or some of the potent culture-specific words could have been allowed to permeate the receptor text. Indexical glossing would have proved a helpful tool too, to generate the kind of "counter-transference" that Derrida and Lacan have recommended. Such techniques would have stressed the "positionality" (a place from which values are interpreted and constructed rather than a locus of an already determined set of values) of both the poet and the poem.

The last example that I offer to illustrate the force of "counter-transference" that an analyst-translator can initiate is Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's translation of Mahasweta Devi's short stories. Spivak's work has been much discussed and debated and I have written in detail about it earlier (Mukherjee 2000:94-105). Here I will just illustrate with one example the rhetorical dimensions evident in Spivak's translations.

Discussing the role of the publisher as an intermediary in the process of translation, Ritu Menon mentions Devi's short story published by Kali for Women in the anthology *Truth Tales* as "*Wet Nurse*" and Spivak's translation and extraordinary analysis of the same story as "*Breastgiver*" (Spivak 1987:128-30). Menon says that during that presentation, Spivak offered no less than eight possible interpretations of the original: as a historian and teacher of literature, from the author's subject position, the teacher's and the reader's position, a Marxist feminist reading, a liberal feminist reading, and a gendered subaltern reading.

In her translation, Spivak reinstates the symbolical "naming" of Devi's text "Stanadayini" as "Breastgiver". (Whereas 'Wet Nurse' would have had the original Bengali word as 'Dhai Ma') ; the translator's choice of "naming" the text as "Wet Nurse" governed that particular translation which played on the mythic connotations of the name of the protagonist Jasodhara and to a large extent neutralized the subversive impact of the text). Spivak's interpellation or *catachresis* in the reading of Devi's *symbolical* text maps a structure of relations onto another plane or another symbolic system that enriches the textual discourse. Catachresis describes the process by which a writer or a reader/analyst/translator can interrupt the flow of conventional meaning and insert a contradictory or alternative system of meaning. Catachresis ruptures the propriety - the conventional meaningfulness - of the discursive moment. Without an awareness of this rupture, there is no impetus for treating a text as symbolic. Catachresis and symbolism invoke one another, even though they might occupy different textual modalities. Spivak's alternative system of meaning is the Marxist feminist analysis of the text demonstrating the use of the gendered subaltern by the capitalist society. As Kristeva explained in her discussion of the use of poetic language, catachresis offers a challenge to the hegemony of meanings dominated by patriarchal culture and organized by certain behavioural norms. By challenging the conventional meaningfulness of Devi's short story, Spivak activates the discourse of counter-transference in her translation that addresses the rhetorical richness of Devi's text.

My attempt in this paper has been to discuss the possibility of cultural transference through the processes of

translation so that the sub-textual rhythms and the tensions of the text do not remain hidden. By the instances given above, I have tried to show the degree of success extant translation practice has achieved and also the way different kinds of texts need different methods of approach. It always remains the translator's aspiration to make manifest in the translated text the "encyclopedic" (*Eco 1984:157*) relationship between language and human creativity. The successive efforts of different translators working on a single text only go to show the inexhaustiveness of the textual residue that tempts yet another cycle of translations.

## References

- Burman, Antoine (2000). **Translation and Trials of the Foreign**. Trans. L. Venuti. *The Translation Studies Reader* (ed.) Lawrence Venuti. London & New York: Routledge.
- Catford, J.C. (1969). **A Linguistic Theory of Translation**. London: OUP.
- Das, Jibonananda (1993). **Jibonananda Daser Kavya Sangraha**. Calcutta: Bharobi.
- Derrida, Jacques (1974). **Of Grammatology**. Trans. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.

- Eco, Umberto (1984). **Semiotics and the Philosophy of Language**. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Geertz, Clifford (1973). **The Interpretation of Cultures**. New York: Basic Books.
- Kristeva, Julia (1984). **The Revolution in Poetic Language**. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Lacan, Jacques (1977). **Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis**. Trans. Sheridan, Alan. New York: Norton.
- Marcuse, Herbert (1964). **One Dimensional Man**. New York: Norton.
- Menon, Ritu (2002). "Authorial Submissions, Publishing and Translation" in **Translation, Text and Theory: The Paradigm of India**. New Delhi: Sage Publications.
- Mounin. G. (1963). *Les Problemes Theoriques de la Traduction*. Paris: Gallimard.
- Mukherjee, Tutun (2000). "Of Other Voices: Mahasweta's Devi's Short Stories Trans. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak" in **English and the Indian Short Story**. (ed) Mohan Ramanan and P. Shailaja. New Delhi: Orient Longman.
- Sikhamani (2000). **Black Rainbow**. Hyderabad: Milinda Publications.



Spivak, Gayatri Chakravorty (1987). **In Other Worlds: Essays in Cultural Politics**. New York: Methuen.

Steiner, George (1975). **After Babel**. New York & London: OUP.

Toury, Gideon (1980). **In Search of a Theory of Translation**. Tel Aviv: The Porter Institute of Poetics and Semiotics.

# OF DEFINING AND REDEFINING AN 'IDEAL' TRANSLATOR: PROBLEMS AND POSSIBILITIES

SOMDATTA MANDAL

*Abstract:* With the problem of linguistic and cultural translation gaining predominance in post-colonial studies, my presentation will try to evaluate practical issues and problems related to translation primarily in four categories. The first is when the author himself/herself acts as the translator of his/her own text. References to Alka Sarogi's Sahitya Akademi award winning novel *Kalikatha: Via Bypass* and Amit Chaudhuri's fiction will support this section. Translating a work like Joginder Paul's *Khwabrau* (*Sleepwalkers*) by someone closely related to the author forms the focus of the second category. The third category comprises different versions of translating the same text by academics and freelancers. Different versions of Rajinder Singh Bedi's short story "Laajwanti" and Jibanananda Das's "Banalata Sen" will be discussed in this section. To focus upon the fourth and final category, I will use cinematic translations of adapted texts – Mahasweta Devi's *Hazaar Churashir Ma* and the film as well as theatrical adaptation of her short story *Rudaali*. My presentation will end with the contention that since there are no immediate solutions in sight, there is nothing called an 'ideal' translator.

I begin with a comment by Walter Benjamin that Homi Bhaba quotes at the head of a chapter in his *The Location of Culture*: "*Translation passes through continua of transformation, not abstract ideas of identity and similarity*", (Walter Benjamin 1994:214) which implies a language that is performative and active, or literary translation, where the language is formulative or enunciatory, the transformational process cannot (or possibly, doesn't want to) ensure a sense of belonging. The separated textuality of the translated text is proposed by, among others, the new signifying and stylizing practices, and a new order of expression that create a lot of ground between the *ur*-text and the finished product. A translation does not want to remain a mere mirror image of the original in a different language; it always aspires to appropriate elements of a new textuality, to assume a new identity and to transcend strict similarities with the *ur*-text. Both of these images are abstract activities, but are now subsumed under a new language game - that of growth, not simply transformation. This 'growth' is largely a product of reading (or misreading) of culture in which the reader brings his own ingrained ideas and cultural perceptions. The textuality of the translated text, in that sense, is a composite in which a cross-cultural dialogue marks a space of complicity and conformation.

Even if we agree with all these propositions, a basic question remains unanswered, viz. who is an 'ideal' translator? With the problem of linguistic and cultural translation gaining prominence in postcolonial studies, this paper attempts to evaluate practical issues and problems related to translation of his/her own text. References to Rabindranath Tagore's own translation of *Gitanjali (Song Offerings)* in 1912, and ninety

years later, Alka Saraogi's Sahitya Akademi award winning novel *Kalikatha-Via Bypass* illustrate this category.

Given that English, the only language into which Rabindranath Tagore translated his own work, was the language of his colonial masters, any evaluation of his work as a translator is essentially a 'colonial discourse'. But the extraordinary circumstances under which the poet started translating his own songs need to be recapitulated here (*Farida Majid 2001:85-100*). In 1912, the intelligentsia of Bengal decided to rectify the neglect of their greatest poet by celebrating his fiftieth birthday in the Town Hall of Calcutta (a very rare honour for a non-white in those days). After a string of other jubilee celebrations, the poet felt physically and emotionally exhausted and decided to have his vacation in England. He was due to set sail from Calcutta on March 19<sup>th</sup>, but being taken ill the night before, he retired to his family estate in East Bengal for rest and recovery. It was there that he began to translate some of his *Gitanjali* songs into English. In a letter to his niece, a year later, he wrote:

*That I cannot write English is such a patent fact that I never had even the vanity to feel ashamed of it ... I had not the energy to sit down and write anything new. So I took up the poems of Gitanjali and set myself to translate them one by one.*  
(Krishna Kripalini 1980:221)

As Majid rightly points out, one should keep in mind the fact that these were not 'poems' as such in terms of Tagore's entire canon.<sup>1</sup> (Majid: 100). Being the verbal parts of short musical compositions, their brevity was a factor singularly



suitable for a novice translator's enterprise under the circumstances. In the West, however, this simplicity was conveniently seen as "*the beauty and freshness of his Oriental thought*", not as a distillation achieved by consummate artistry.

From the time he was well enough to travel and his arrival in London a few months later, Tagore had filled an exercise book with English renditions of the *Gitanjali* songs. He presented it to William Rothenstein who later showed it to A.C. Bradley and W.B. Yeats. When India Society decided to publish a private edition of the book, Yeats was obviously chosen to be the editor and to write the preface. We are all aware of how the relationship between Tagore and Yeats soured. They parted ways and the very same man who was all praise for the Indian bard and was largely instrumental in introducing him to the western audience, wrote to Rothenstein in May 1935:

*Damn Tagore! ...he thought it more important to see and know English than to be a great poet, he brought out sentimental rubbish and wrecked his reputation, Tagore does not know English, no Indian knows English. Nobody can write with music and style in a language not learned in childhood and ever since the language of his thought.*

I quote so many well-known historical facts just to emphasize that the crux of all these interrelated matters lies in

Tagore as a translator of his own work. Like many Bengalis of his time, and judging from his letters and speeches, Tagore had a good command of English. There are occasional phrases and lines in his rendition that capture the spirit of the original and are striking in English. Yet, *Gitanjali* is still a work of translation, which was made in the isolation of Tagore's village-estate in Bengal, with no other purpose than sharing some of his favourite songs with friends he would meet on his forthcoming trips abroad. There are inaccuracies and mistranslations in *Gitanjali*, but the apparent lack of any extra-literary motive make these mistakes tolerable in the days when there was no serious challenge to the assumption that literary translation is an inexact art, and when mistranslations of Oriental literature were even welcome (as in the case of Edward Fitzgerald's *The Rubbaiyat of Omar Khayyam*) as a creative activity of a sort.

If ability or command of English were in question, one would not be wrong to accept *improvements* in Tagore's translating endeavours after the *Gitanjali* experience. Though there are indications of improved English in his letter to Rothenstein over this period, yet we find that things went from bad to worse in his subsequent translations. In one of his letters Tagore stated:

*Please thank Yeats once again on my behalf for the help that he rendered to my poems in their perilous adventure of a foreign reincarnation and assure him that I at least never underestimate the value of his literary comradeship. Latterly I have written and published both prose and poetry in English, mostly translations, unaided by any friendly help,*

*but this again I have done in order to express my ideas, not for gaining any reputation for my mastery in the use of a language which can never be mine.*

The sincerity of this admission becomes suspect since Rothenstein, *in fact*, was being inundated with poems and translations, which Tagore kept sending him with a single-minded willfulness. Edward Thompson also accused Tagore of badly truncating his greater poems and inserting in his English translations "*pretty-pretty nonsense that was not in the original at all*". According to Thompson, Tagore's treatment of the Western public amounts to an insult to its intelligence, as he had managed to quarrel with everyone who criticized his English so far. Tagore claimed that being a Christian missionary, Thompson was incapable of understanding his idea of the *jiban-debata*.

Moving on to a similar phenomenon in very recent times, the problem of self-translation (also called 'auto-translation') manifests itself in a different form. Narrated in a chronological fashion, Alka Saraogi's novel *Kalikatha-Via Bypass* (Alka Saraogi 2002) gives us a brilliant picture of the Marwari business community that migrated from Rajasthan and made their second home in Calcutta. The novel was originally written in Hindi and later translated into English by the author herself within a short span of time. In the introduction of the translated version, she claimed that she had "rewritten" most of it and in the acknowledgements section admitted that her self-translation was faulty, and she had "*little*

*confidence in [her] Hinglish*". Though there is no perfect way of translating a text, one expected a little more finesse on the part of Saraogi, especially when she was confident that it was she who would be able to do justice to her novel. In spite of the help that she had received from her unnamed friend, it remains a great lapse on the part of the publishers to print the English version without correcting several grammatical errors and faulty literal translations. Phrases like "*the weekly schedule of the his classes*" (Alka Saraogi 2002:173), "*the British have broken the back of Bengal*" (Alka Saraogi 2002:202), "*Kishore Babu was put in mind of a three-month-old foetus*" (Alka Saraogi 2002:247); "*Perhaps it her fate*" (Alka Saraogi 2002:242); or "*making a flag out of the front of your sari*" (Alka Saraogi 2002:264) definitely lowers the charm of reading a Sahitya Akademi award-winning novel. Thus, as both these cases illustrate, the notion that the original writer is the best translator of his or her own work remains a myth.

## II

Translating a work like Joginder Paul's *Sleepwalkers* by someone closely related to the author forms the focus of the second category. First published as *Khwabrau* in Urdu in Lahore in 1990, this novella was made available to Indian readers in its Indian edition in 1991. An excellent translation into English by Sunil Trivedi and Sukrita Paul Kumar now makes it possible for the non-Urdu speaking readers appreciate the story. Apart from being a labour of love, what moves the reader most is probably the theme of the story, which harps upon the universal ideas of pain, anguish and trauma of separation following the partition of India. Briefly speaking, it tells the story of one Deewane Maulavi Sahab, who migrated from Lucknow to Karachi like the other *mohajirs* after the



partition but transported the entire city "*within the fold of their hearts*". While some of the other *mohajirs* are shocked into insanity, the protagonist does not feel the pain of separation because he is a sleepwalker and finds security in the world of dreams. Other call him mad, but it is his madness that helps him keep his sanity.

Apart from the gripping storyline what appeals to the readers is the epilogue entitled "*On Writing Sleepwalkers*" where Paul himself provides the background of conceiving such a tale. Visits to Lahore in the mid-eighties made Joginder Paul realize that "*the situation itself is the meaning that inspired [him] to attempt the novella*". He candidly admits, "*Suffer did I no less than Deewane Maulavi Sahab, the suffering having driven the old man out of his wits, and me to an insane pursuit of premature sanity*". Personal experience of the writer therefore made the translation of the feelings of the protagonist much more authentic. Again, the universality of the theme of the story is also reiterated when the author narrates how a German Indologist burst into tears after reading the story, managing to say between sobs, "*But this is my story. This is the story of all of us living on either side of the Berlin wall*". Though the wall has come down, the mental barriers still remain. Such a theme probably helps to transcend the limitations of translation.

### III

The third category comprises different versions of translating the same text by academics and freelancers. To illustrate my point I focus upon different translated versions of

Sadaat Hasan Manto's famous Urdu short story "*Toba Tek Singh*" and Jibanananda Das's eponymous poem "*Banalata Sen*". A comparative study of selected portions from the three translated versions of the Manto story reveals interesting details as the translation depends a lot on the qualification and background of the translator. Whereas the first version done by Tahira Naqvi (Alok Bhalla 1994) in 1994 is more condensed, with simple direct sentences (with Naqvi, settled in the United States herself, probably having the western readers as her target), the second translation done by Khalid Hasan (Rushdie 1997) in 1997 is more textual. The translator here seeks out more culture-specific words to remain as faithful to the original as possible. For example, instead of using just 'sweets' in the earlier version, he mentions 'rice crispies'. When M. Asaduddin (Ravikant & Saini 2001) ventured to translate the same story in 2001, he was already aware of the drawbacks of the earlier versions and therefore added a detailed explanation with notes at the end of his work. I quote from this note:

*Towards the end of the story, by a brilliant metonymic process, Bishen Singh becomes Toba Tek Singh; the person becomes the place where he was born and had his roots. They merge inextricably with each other, so much so, that towards the end of the story, at least in the Urdu text, it is difficult to distinguish one from the other. To my knowledge, no English translation of the story has endeavoured to retain this tension and ambiguity. I have endeavoured to retain it even if it meant sacrificing a BIT of lucidity.*

(Ravikant & Saini 2001)

Thus the physical description of Bishen Singh or Toba Tek Singh changes from "*ghoulish appearance*" of the first version, the "*frightened appearance*" of the second, to "*a fearsome look*" in the third. Again in another instance, the mention of Toba Tek Singh's daughter becomes much more explicit with details as one analyses the versions between 1994 and 2001.

1. *He had a daughter who was grown up now. As a child, she cried whenever she saw her father, and she continued to cry for him when she was a young woman. (Naqvi)*
2. *When he was first confined, he had left an infant daughter behind, now a pretty young girl of fifteen. She would come occasionally, and sit in front of him with tears rolling down her cheeks. In the strange world that he inhabited, hers was just another face. (Hasan)*
3. *He had a daughter who had grown up a little, every passing month, during these fifteen years, and was now a young woman. Bishen Singh could not recognize her. She used to cry at the sight of her father when she was an infant. Now a grown woman, tears still flowed from her eyes, seeing her father. (Asaduddin)*

The climatic end of the story also focuses upon the personal interpretations of the translator.

1. *But he was adamant and would not budge from the spot where he stood. When the guards threatened to use force, he installed himself in a place between the borders and stood there as if no power in the world could move him. ...Before the sun rose, a piercing cry arose from Bishan Singh who had been quiet and unmoving all this time. (Naqvi)*
2. *The guards even tried force, but soon gave up. There he stood in no man's land on his swollen legs like a colossus ... just before sunrise, Bishen Singh, the man who had stood on his legs for fifteen years, screamed and as officials from the two sides rushed towards him, he collapsed to the ground. (Hasan)*
3. *When they tried to move him forcibly to the other side, he stood on his swollen legs at a spot in the middle, in a posture that seemed to suggest that no power on earth could move him from there ...Just before sunrise, a sky-rendering cry emerged from the gullet of Bishen Singh, who till then had stood still and unmoving. (Asaduddin)*



With the different versions of Jibanananda Das's poem "*Banalata Sen*" the problem manifests itself further. Jibanananda Das (1899-1954) was one of the foremost figures of modern Bengali poetry and his work combines the substance of international modernism with the timeless experience of rural Bengal, and both these with the complex and disturbing patterns of urban life and political upheaval of his times. Since Jibanananda's poetry has a major contribution to Bengali poetic idiom, his work becomes specially challenging for the translator.

In his book *Translation as Discovery*, Sujit Mukherjee compares six different versions of "*Banalata Sen*" that had been published by 1981, including the translation by Martin Kirkman, as well as a "transcreation" of the poem by Mukul Sharma (Mukherjee 1994). Published in 1935, "*Banalata Sen*" may or may not be the best poem that the poet had written, but it is undoubtedly the most popular one. Built up through a series of opulent images of sea and island, lashing storm and quiet resting place, fragrant forests and shipwrecked sailors, captures the old fairy-land magic, that merges the geography of mythical and historical times only to culminate in the frustration and hope of the modern age. Asok and Vimbisara, Sravasti and Vidisa, the Malay Sea and the Sinhala Sea cease to be the luxurious backdrop of a romantic escape. Apart from heightening the contrast between the past and the present, and intensifying the pain and agony of modern man, the poem connects the narratorial voice with the ever-moving forces of history<sup>2</sup> (Chaudhuri 1998). The haunting rhythm, the rich imagery, the magic of proper names and the ethereal beauty of

the concluding sestet have contributed to its immense popularity. A comparison of the closing stanzas from some of the translations would help us to understand the problem better.

Sukanta Chaudhuri's translation reads as follows:

*At the end of all the days, dusk comes like the sound of dew;  
The kite wipes off the scent of sunlight from its wings.  
The earth's colours all quenched, the manuscript prepares  
To tell its stories, lit by firefly gleams.  
All the birds come home, all the rivers - all life's trade  
ends.  
Only the dark abides; and, to sit face to face, Banalata Sen.*

(Chaudhuri 1998)

Clinton B. Seely's translations in his book on Jibanananda Das's life and works are always competent and as faithful to the original meaning as possible. Seely's primary interest in his translations appears to be to reproduce the words of the source poems as accurately as possible. But in trying to avoid misreading and in following the sense of the original faithfully, the American largely ignores the formal and tonal quality of the original poem. He has translated it in free verse. Thus his version of the closing stanzas of the "*Banalata Sen*", reads like this:

*At day's end, like hush of dew  
Comes evening. A hawk wipes the scent of sunlight  
from its wings.  
When earth's colours fade and some pale design is*

*sketched,*  
*The glimmering fireflies paint in the story,*  
*All birds come home, all rivers, and all this life's*  
*tanks finished.*  
*Only darkness remains, as I sit there face to face with*  
*Banalata Sen.*  
(Seely 120)

In a note prefacing his translations, Chidananda Dasgupta, a distant relative of Jibanananda Das, reveals that the poet has given his "blessings readily" to five of the poems he had rendered into English shortly before Das's death in 1954 (Dasgupta 1972:28). Moreover, Dasgupta informs us that the poet had agreed to the translator's decision to avoid too literal renderings. Apparently, the poet had allowed Dasgupta "a certain degree of sacrifice of the literal meaning" and even some tampering with the sense of the original to make the meaning of a poem "comprehensible in a foreign idiom". The poet seemed to have also consented to Dasgupta's decision to have "smoothed out to a clear flow ...Jibanananda's very complicated and apparently arbitrary syntax". Thus Dasgupta decided to depart from the original as often as he felt necessary. Terming the tendency of translators in general to "convey all of the many layers of thought, feeling and rhythm of the original" as a "temptation" to be avoided and as the wrong kind of "enthusiasm" he describes himself as someone opting for "restraint". (Dasgupta 1972:28) Thus in his translation of "Banalata Sen" we read that "The raven wipes the smell of [sic] warm sun/ From its wings; the world's noises die". (Dasgupta 1972:28)

Having a series of translations before him already, Fakrul Alam is more conscious about his method of translation of the same poem. In the detailed introduction to the volume of Jibanananda's poems that he translated<sup>3</sup>, (Alam 1999) he explains his *modus operandi* as well as drawbacks in some of the earlier translated versions of the same poem. Confessing that he knew full well that a lot of the poetry of the original has got lost in his renderings as well, he states that to think that *"all or even much of the poetic qualities of Das's poems can be transmitted into another language is therefore to indulge in wishful thinking"*. For instance, the tonal qualities of a line such as this one from the *"Banalata Sen"* is uncapturable in translation:

*Chul tar kabekar andhokar Vidishar Nisha*

Even if one did not know any Bengali one could still hear the rich music of these lines coming from the extensive sound patterning - the internal rhyme and the repetition of the "a" "h" "r" and "s" sounds (Alam 1999). Alam further states that he has always worked on the assumption that translation of poetry should involve not only following the words of the source poem, but also in recovering something of the poetic qualities of the original, in transmitting the tone of the poet, and in conveying as much as is possible of Das's formal experiments and idiosyncrasies as a poet. Another goal that he had set himself was that *"the translated poem should be capable of being read as a poem in English in its own right"*. So the last stanza of his translation of the *"Banalata Sen"* reads as follows:

*At the end of a long day, with the soft sound of dew,*



*Night falls; the kite wipes the sun's smells from its wings;  
The world's colours fade; fireflies light up the world anew;  
Time to wrap up work and get set for the telling of tales;  
All birds home - rivers too - life's transactions close again;  
What remains is darkness and facing me - Banalata Sen!*

(Fakrul Alam 1999)

#### IV

To focus upon the fourth and final category, that of translating the text from one medium to another, I will use cinematic translations of adapted texts - Mahasweta Devi's *Hazaar Churasir Ma* ("Mother of 1084") and the film as well as theatrical adaptation of her short story "*Rudaali*" as examples. In the Indian context, the problem of authenticity acquires a newer dimension in the sense that, often, regional languages create more distance. The general problems pertaining to literary translation from SL to TL (source language to translated language) also becomes apparent in films. For instance, we can cite the example of *Hazaar Churashir Ma*. Told in simplistic terms, it narrates the story of an unsuspecting mother who faces the trauma and tribulations after the death of her young Naxalite revolutionary son in Calcutta when she is called upon to identify his corpse and the narration centers around how she gets involved in her son's political activities only after his death.

Though Govind Nihalani, the film director, was true to the spirit of the translated text, and though Mahasweta Devi herself had given a most heartening endorsement for the performance of Jaya Bachchan in the lead role of the mother,

for serious viewers across Bengal, the film seemed to have failed in capturing the haunting memories of the turbulent 70's and the actual Naxalite movement seemed too insipid. Yet considered from the psycho-sociological angle, the film can be called successful in the depiction of the lead role of Sujata, the mother, who is the prototype of every urban Indian woman who pretends to have established a great channel of communication with her children, but seldom digs deep to understand what might be bothering them. And after she does, she often gives up, saying that she cannot handle them any more.

Another interesting variation of the same problem occurs when the original text as well as the filmic version involves masters in their respective fields. Take the case when Rabindranath Tagore's *Ghare Baire* (*The Home and the World*) is made into a film by the world-class filmmaker Satyajit Ray. Tagore's 1916 novel, written in the dairy form of narrative is a significant, yet rather complex work of fiction. Embedded in it, is a historical moment of the *swadeshi* in Bengal around the years 1903 to 1908 - a period in Indian nationalism when the concerted demand for self-government and the boycott of British goods seemed for a while to rock the very foundation of imperial administration in India. This theme is dealt in detail by juxtaposing the character of the fire-brand revolutionary Sandip with Nikhil, the noble but misunderstood hero who personally believed that each individual has a freedom to choose his own way of serving the cause of social and political emancipation. What is more significant is how Tagore portrays the invasion of this *swadeshi* political movement to "home", and ultimately brings in a threat to feminine virtue.

When such a complex story is made into a film, one is naturally interested to see how the symbolic meanings of the "home" and the "world" are analyzed. Closely following the text, Ray's statement that he "*did not use a single line of Tagore's dialogue in the film ... The way people talk in the novel would not be acceptable to any audience*" puzzles us. Again, though Tagore presents his introspective story through multiple points of view, shuffling through the narratives of the three main characters at random, Ray's straightforward narration in the film makes some critics feel that the film is structurally weak. One such view endorses that the film is divided into three separate watertight compartments. The first section deals exclusively with Bimala. The political involvement of Sandip and Nikhil covers the second section. The third section primarily focuses on the Hindu-Muslim riot and clash. These three sections do not seem to be well coordinated, or in other words, one section does not automatically lead to the other. Again, though critics and the viewers in general accept the changes when a work of art is transferred from one medium to another, from one set of codes to another, one of the most frequently raised questions regarding *The Home and the World* is that whereas Tagore left his novel rather "open-ended" (with the communal riots breaking out, Sandip runs away to safety and Nikhil rides off into the night to face the hostile mob), Ray makes his story rather "well-closed". In the film, Bimala is seen looking out of the window and she sees the people carrying Nikhil's dead body in a procession and immediately the image of the widowed Bimala fills up the screen. The film, considered one of Ray's failures, is now merely referred to as a definite 'period'



story. Much earlier, Tagore had come to realize that "*cinema continues to be a sycophant to literature because no creator has yet liberated it from this servitude by the strength of his own genius*" and Satyajit Ray attempted to do just that.

A deviation of the medium and the problems of translation are also witnessed in the case of theatrical adaptations. Take the case of Mahasweta Devi's short story "*Rudaali*". The stark setting and Usha Ganguly's remarkable acting in the role of the protagonist *Sanichari* had made this theatrical production by the Calcutta - based *Rangakarmee* group a memorable event (Devi & Ganguly 1999). Though a Hindi production, this play had received rave reviews from all kinds of audience in Calcutta, which included the snooty Bengali theatre-goers who are used to viewing only avant-garde productions and also not very much conversant with the national language. Years later, Kalpana Lazmi's directional venture made the film version of the same story more a vehicle for presenting a matured Dimple Kapadia along with full support from Bhupen Hazarika's soul-rending music [*'Dil hoom hoom karey ghabraye'*]. But I think since this film remains the only medium of approach to Mahasweta Devi's work for the pan-Indian audience, the positive side of any transcreation has to be accepted as an equally important genre. The only exception ofcourse is the rare and enterprising viewer who would read up the translated English version of the text before going to the movie hall or vice-versa.

After considering all these various forms of translation, I am still confounded with the question that forms the title of this paper: "*Who is an 'ideal' translator*"? Though the choice of the medium alters the message, the question still remains as



to how far the translator can construct those messages effectively. In a recent article, the noted critic Susan Sontag opined:

*To translate means many things, among them: to circulate, to transport, to disseminate, to explain, to make (more) accessible. By literal translation we mean, we could mean, the translation of the small percentage of published books actually worth reading: that is to say, worth rereading...In what I call the evangelical incentive, the purpose of translation is to enlarge the readership of a book deemed to be important. (Sontag 2003)*

Sontag further explains that the translators were "the bearers of a certain inward culture" and that to translate "thoughtfully, painstakingly, ingeniously, respectfully, is a measure of the translator's fealt to the enterprise of literature itself". Though she propagated such values as 'integrity', 'responsibility', 'fidelity', 'boldness', 'humility', and 'ethical understanding' in the translator, she does not define who an 'ideal' translator is. She avers what is obvious: that 'literary translation is a branch of literature- anything but a mechanical task'. This article thus ends with the naïve contention that since there are no immediate solutions in sight, there is nothing called an 'ideal' translator.

## Notes

1. In terms of Tagore's entire canon, Bengalis use the word *kobita*, poems, poetry, to refer to his longer and

children's poems as opposed to Rabindra-sangeet, his songs, of which there are more than 2,000 in existence. In most cases, the verbal and musical portions of each of these songs were composed simultaneously.

2. In his *"Translation Editor's Preface"*, Chaudhuri tells us that the translations emerged out of a workshop where the eleven translators had agreed to do away with the rhymes but preserve *"the general movement and impact of the original poems"* (xvii). The translators, we learn, had decided to be pragmatic rather than consistent in using Bengali names of plants, birds, seasons, etc.
3. In his introduction Alam also points out that Faizul Latif Chowdhury's collection of translations of Jibanananda Das's poems *I have Seen the Bengal's Face: Poems from Jibanananda Das* (Dhaka: Creative Workshop 1995) is uneven in quality and significantly the better translations in the volume are the ones by the foreigners - an Englishman, an American and an Australian. *"The Bengali translators fail probably because in translating verse the translator must have a much surer command of the target language than of the source language"*.

## References

- Alam, Fakrul (1999). **Jibanananda Das: Selected Poems with an Introduction, Chronology, and Glossary.** Dhaka: The University Press Limited.

Bhalla, Alok (ed) (1994). **Stories About the Partition of India**. New Delhi: Harper Collins.

Benjamin, Walter. (1994). Quoted in **The Location of Culture**. Homi Bhaba. London and New York: Routledge.

Chaudhuri, Sukanta (1998). **A Certain sense: Poems by Jibanananda Das**. Calcutta: Sahitya Akademi.

Dasgupta, Chidananda (1972). **Jibanananda Das**. New Delhi: Sahitya Akademi.

Devi, Mahasweta & Ganguly, Usha (1999). **From Fiction to Performance**. Calcutta: Seagull.

Kripalani, Krishna (1980). **Letter to Indira Devi**, 6 May 1913 in **Rabindranath Tagore: A Biography**. Calcutta: Visva-Bharati, (revised 2<sup>nd</sup> edn)

Majid, Farida (2001). "*Tagore's Own Translations: Blindness and a Hindsight*" in **Revisioning English in Bangladesh**. (eds.) Fakrul Alam, Niaz Zaman & Tahmina Ahmed. Dhaka: The University Press Ltd.

Manto, Sadaat Hasan (1953). **Toba Tek Singh**. *Savera*

Mukherjee, Sujit (1994). **Translation as Discovery**. New Delhi: Longmans.

Paul, Joginder (2001). **Sleepwalkers**. Trans. Sunil Trivedi & Sukrita Paul Kumar. New Delhi: Katha Publications.

Ravikant & Saini, Tarun .K. (eds)( 2001). **Translating Partition**. New Delhi: Katha.

Rushdie, Salman & West, Elizabeth (eds) (1997). **The Vintage Book of Indian Writing 1947-1997**. (n.p)

Saraogi, Alka (2002). **Kalikatha-Via Bypass**. New Delhi: Rupa & Co.

Seely, Clinton B (np) **A Poet Apart: A Literary Biography of the Bengali Poet Jibanananda Das (1899-1954)**. Newark: University of Delaware Press.

Sontag, Susan (2003). **Babel Now**. The Times Literary Supplement. 12 June 2003.

[http://www.the-tls.co.uk/story.asp?story\\_id=27334](http://www.the-tls.co.uk/story.asp?story_id=27334)



---

## Translation Reviews

---

Burning Ground : Singed Souls

**Ilyas Ahmed Gaddi**

*Fire Area*

(English translation of Urdu Novel Fire Area): 2001

pp. 346 Rs. 80/-

Ilyas Ahmed Gaddi (1932-97), recipient of Sahitya Akademi Award (1994) for *Fire Area*, presents in this novel a world where crime thrives and exploitations of all kinds go unnoticed. Collier's life is a doomed existence where one toils for a few crumbs of bread in a dark world of dangers designed by greed and power politics. It is a '*bold and aggressive*' description of human degradation where the virtuous are forced to surrender or are sacrificed without qualms.

Coal tarnishes not only the soul of the contractors, bureaucrats and labour union leaders but also turns them into inhuman tyrants. The unholy trinity of these three groups dictates and decides the fates of roofless, penniless villagers who have no alternative but to yield and live a precarious life - always on the precipice of doom and destruction.

Interwoven in the text is the conspiracy to convert an accident case into a 'missing' case to evade compensation claims. Rahmat Mians 'disappearance' leaves its tragic impact on the aged father, wife and a child who are waiting in vain for the missing person to arrive. Interunion rivalries and feuds have also been authentically described. Gaddi brings us a world where idealism is swallowed by realities of day-to-day survival. Majumdar's idealism triumphs after taking the toll of his own life. He dies without surrendering his soul.

The blurb brings to our notice Jai Ratan's credentials as a translator. *One of the finest and the most prolific of translators from Urdu to English, a Sahitya Akademi awarded translator*, it says, who has been credited with several works. The translator uses several colloquial expressions in italics such as *sala*, *dhora*, *pahalwans*, *qur*, *qilli-danda*, *basti* in the body of the text and provides their meanings in the form of footnotes wherever these expressions occur in the text.

He uses the distorted nativised expression of the word 'theatre' viz. *thater* to show how foreign expressions get assimilated in vernacular languages. Yet, at the same time his explanations are not satisfactory, are even incorrect. For example, *jethji* (193) is an expression that a woman uses exclusively for her husband's elder brother. The footnote shows it as 'elder brother' (here brother-in-law). Now both of these explanations are misleading. Can a husband call his wife's elder brother as *jethji*? The correct expression in fact should have been 'husband's elder brother'. The same slip is evident in the expression *de-war* (199), which translates allegedly as 'brother-in-law'. This also should have been glossed as 'husband's younger brother'. If one is using the vernacular expression *sala* [a mild term of abuse - meaning 'brother-in-law (wife's brother)'], one should use the plural form *sale* and not *salas*. This becomes a hybrid expression. On page 84 Khatunia, a Muslim woman says, *Alif Zabra* which does not seem to be appropriate even if she is an illiterate - it should be *Alif jabar* - aa. A child might be parodying *Alif-be-pe* (97) but the later half *Ma Mufgi Lade* is unintelligible. The country-made revolver has been described as *phatpatu* (p 265), which seems to be slang.

Jai Ratan has tried to retain the colloquial touch while translating. 'How you joke, Ansari Saheb' (p 21) may not be a totally appropriate translation of "*Kyoun majak karte hain*"?

The Hindi/Urdu proverb "*paani me rehkar magar se bair*" loses its implication in the "*one who wants to live in the river should not fall foul of the crocodile*" (p 33).

These are academic nuances. These intricate oddities notwithstanding, Jai Ratan's translation is an honest, convincing and engrossing rendering of the original text.

**A.G. KHAN, Ph.D**

## TRANSLATION: WHERE ANGELS FEAR TO TREAD

Abdul Bismillah,

*The Story of the Loom.*

English translation of the Hindi Novel

*Jhini Jhini Bini Chadariya* translated by Rashmi  
Govind, Madras.

Macmillan India Ltd., 1996

P.251 IX priced at Rs 140.

Abdul Bismillah's Jhini Jhini Bini Chadariya was selected by Macmillan India Ltd. under their ambitious project sponsored by Education Society of Madras to render into English contemporary classics in Telugu, Tamil, Kannada, Malayalam, Gujarathi, Marathi, Oriya, Punjabi, Urdu and Hindi. This novel had earned the prestigious Soviet Land Nehru Award and the author was invited to spend a fortnight in the erstwhile Soviet Russia.

Set in the mythological city of Kashi or Varanasi or more popularly known as Benaras, the novel weaves the sad and lamentable plight of thousands of weavers around Benaras, who become pawns on the chessboard of a capitalist system of merchants, brokers and bureaucracy. The glitter of Benarasi brocade is coloured with the blood of the weavers who live a hand-to-mouth existence. The woman folk who toil all their lives in helping the men weaving fabulous Benarasi saris die in poverty never draping themselves in the saris they help weave. The progressive and liberal policies of the government are masterminded by the horde of merchants to their own advantage by bribing the officials entrusted with co-operative



movement. Hence Mateen's bid to form a society of thirty weavers is set at naught by the scheming Hajis Ameerulla and his henchmen.

Amidst this stark exploitation are woven the political aspirations of local leaders who make matters worse by fanning communal passions. Hence, whatever little resistance the poor weavers could muster is reduced to surrender to the Hajis who rush to their '*rescue*' under the guise of charity.

Aspirations of Aleemun, Iqbal, Rauf uncle, Najibuniya and Rehana are nipped in the bud thanks to a system of mass exploitation. While Aleemun dies of Tuberculosis, Rehana falls victim to illiteracy, poverty and superstitions when her hysteria (Seizures) is treated through prayers or witchcraft. The weavers are condemned to live a life of suffering with no prospects of a silver lining.

Rashmi Govind, the translator, is a product of two prestigious universities of Delhi i.e. the University of Delhi and the J.N.U. The translation leaves a lot to be desired. She says every year the ninth month of Hindu calendar synchronizes with the ninth month of the Muslim calendar (p.29). She also blunders when the *babool* tree of the Hindi text is transformed into a *neem* tree in the English version (p.189).

She also betrays some ignorance of historical or cultural facts. For example, Imam Sahab in the context of Moharrum is not a '*leader of prayers in the mosque*' (p.115). In fact, in the given context Imam Sahab stands for the martyr Hazrat Imam Hussain's taaziya. Similarly, in the dirge (p.116) Hazrat Hasan is described as '*going off to war*' whereas Hazrat Hasan was poisoned prior to the martyrdom of Hazrat

Hussain at Karbala. Moreover, *Imambara* is not 'a place in graveyard' as she has it. 'Imambara' is a building (and not a graveyard) where Taaziya and other things related to Moharrum are kept (p 219). Rashmi hurts the common man when she translates *bahuji* a popular endearment for Kamlapati's daughter-in-law into 'wife' (p137).

There are several odd expressions scattered all over the book that are either grammatically or contextually incorrect.e.g. *which* (p.11), *extensive* family (for extended/joint family) (p.249); Bevada (p.99) is *not* 'clumsy' but 'drunk'. Similarly an atheist (or even kaafir) is not a 'materialist' (p.231)

The work would have been better with academic consultations with colleagues.

The layout, the cover page and printing are extremely pleasing and befitting the name of the Macmillans. At the nominal price of Rs. 140 it can be recommended to people who want to have a glimpse into the world of the weavers or breathe in the exotic Benarasi environment.

A.G. KHAN, Ph.D

## TRANSLATION OF "PACHOLA" [MARATHI] INTO "FALL" [ENGLISH]

Prof. Sudhakar Marathe from The Central University of Hyderabad, a well known literary scholar, and an established translator has translated into English a Marathi rural [Grameen] novel, PACHOLA by a well-established author in Marathi, Mr. R.R. Borade. Fall, the translation has been published by National Book Trust, India. It is a highly commendable achievement on Dr. Marathe's part as translating from the rural dialect in to English is a challenging task. As he is a highly educated urban individual, this dialect is not Marathe's home ground. To interpret the writing in the rural style and to bring it into English successfully is not a simple job. Dr. Marathe has tried his best to accomplish this. The novel reads quite well as an independent work. The title chosen for the translation is befitting and heavily loaded with meaning as it includes both the meanings of the fall: the fall as a season when leaves fall from trees, and the fall of the protagonist leading to his tragic end.

By bringing it into English, Dr. Marathe has made available to readers the flavour of rural Indian living and writing, making a regional author's work known to other Indian readers, and adding to the body of translated Indian writing in English.

If we examine and analyze **Fall** on the tenets of the theory of translation so far, by what is usually expected of a good or successful translation, the following points have to be considered:

- (a) Linguistic equivalence at the lexical / idiomatic level, and syntactic level.
- (b) Consistence of rural turns of expression in English.
- (c) Rural Cultural Tone in translation.

If we begin to consider these one by one, some light can be shed on the challenges Dr. Marathe has faced.

Due to the basic difference between the rural dialect and the educated English of the translation, we notice that the lexical equivalents of many Marathi dialectal words such as *kaarta*, *kalkudri*, *maayandali* and many more such words do not reflect the same shades of meaning. *kaarta* for example means a boy whose deeds are condemnable, and usually, it refers to a child who is born unfortunate. The word has been used in its neuter gender form, which has rendered it as even more contemptuous. Usually used in masculine form, *kaarta*, for a boy, or in feminine form, *kaarti*, for a girl, when it is used in its neuter form, it is still worse, not even giving the person the status of a human. The words Marathe uses as equivalents for *karta* in two different places on the same page (p.2) are *rascal* and *brat*. *Rascal* is a dishonest person or when referred to a child, it means the one who misbehaves or plays tricks, but is regarded with fondness. In Marathi, we have a word *labaad*. Surely Parbati does not refer to Garad's son with fondness. In fact, an apt equivalent for English *rascal* for a child is *labaad* as mothers and others fondly refer to such children. A *brat* is an ill-mannered child. However, it means much less than *kaarta*. Perhaps, if Marathe had used *a damned boy/child* for *kaarta*, it would have been closer to the original. *Kalkudri* could have been better translated as 'culprit' in the particular context, though that is not the meaning of the word. Usually, it means the one who sets people to quarrel by talking ill of one to the other. *Maayandal* means plenty, or a great deal. Marathe has translated this as really and truly as he could have translated the sentence as *He was immensely angry*.



Well, at times, there is not enough time given by the publisher to really check small details. The translators have to be content with approximate equivalents.

At the idiomatic level, there is bound to be a great deal of difference. A few instances of idiomatic transference from Marathi appear on pages 45 and 67, for example. *He's cut my nose before the folk.* (p.45) *He is respected in government and all. He will spend money like water, if he has to* (p 67). These and similar others must be purposeful transferences to give the translation the flavour of the original Marathi expressions.

At the syntactic level, there are a large number of sentences in **Fall**, possibly for a similar effect as in the original, which are without a subject. They begin with the verb, though they are not imperatives. The sentence, *popped up in his bed suddenly like a jack in the box* (page 66) is not Marathi, while on the other hand a phrase like *jack in the box*, a very western concept, not mentioned in the original at all has been added. On other occasions, sentences appear to be direct pick-ups from Marathi resulting in non-English syntax. For example, *I don't want ye to yell and scream after, that's why I am warning ye right now.* (page 98). Perhaps, to achieve the effect of the original, the translator seems to have taken syntactic liberties. In this sentence, the word used here viz. *after* is not appropriate. It should have been either *later*, or *afterwards*. Usually, *after* would need a time-referring object such as an event following it.

It must have been difficult for Marathe to find an equivalent English dialect to translate the rural dialect R.R.

Borade has chosen for his novel, *Pachola*. Marathe has tried to create some effect by using only a few dialectal words in English such as *ye* for *you*. However, this choice has not been consistently made use of. *Ye* and *you* have been used as free variants. Marathe has made use of colloquialisms to substitute the lack of dialectal repertoire. For an urban scholar of literature, taking up a whole rural/uneducated community's dialect from English such as the Cockney, or the Black English Vernacular and so on is a difficult choice and it is far too exhausting an effort to interpret from a rural Marathi dialect and to keep fitting the essence and the matter accurately into a rural or uneducated English dialect. And yet, which of such dialects in English to choose would also be hard to think. The best decision would be to make a firm choice right at the outset, realizing the limitation, and state it in the foreword that the translation would make use of normal English known to the majority.

Some cultural concepts need to be brought into a translated text in the same form, as they exist in the original writing. They are so culture-specific that there is no equivalence for them in another culture, and hence, in the language. In this context, some of the terms are borrowed from the original. Words and phrases like *choli*, *uparna*, *roti-kordyas*, *Mriga*, *Bhabi*, or a few translations like eating-house man, seventeen different mouths mouthing seventeen different things, are some of the examples. Marathe has been successful in bringing out the rural and cultural tone in his translation, though.

To sum up, it can be said that Marathe could have been more careful with some choices of words or expressions, but in

other cases, he has done the best possible. Translations are, after all, intercultural documents. Culture-specific concepts/terms could perhaps be summarized or paraphrased. And yet, they may fail to convey the exact sense, and spoil the compactness of expression. Borrowing or code mixing is the only way out which makes a translation interesting and colourful. If this remains within a proportionate limit, a translation becomes readable. Marathe has limited his borrowings and made the translation readable.

**MADHAVI APTE**

## Contributors

DR. ANJALI GERA ROY is Professor in the Dept of Humanities & Social Sciences, I.I.T. Kharagpur - 721 302, West Bengal. She has published "Three Great African Novelists: Achebe, Soyinka, Tutuola" [(2001) New Delhi: Creative], and several articles on Postcolonial literatures and theory. Her current interests are Culture and Media Studies, Folklore and Translation.  
E-mail: [agera\\_99@yahoo.com](mailto:agera_99@yahoo.com)

DR. B. HARIHARAN teaches at the Department of English, P.G. Centre, University of Mysore, Hemangotri, Hassan - 573 220. He has Co-edited two books with Jameela Begum titled "Literary Theory: (Re) Reading culture and Aesthetics" (1997) and "Canadian Diaspora: Asia-Pacific Immigration" (2001), published articles on Canadian fiction and Poetry, Immigrant discourse, First Nations Writing, Theory, Classroom Pedagogy, Malayalam fiction and Hockey and Cricket in Journals and collected volumes.  
E-mail: [hariharanghsn@sancharnet.in](mailto:hariharanghsn@sancharnet.in)

PROFESSOR JHARNA SANYAL is currently Head of the Dept. of English, Calcutta University. Her areas of interest are Medieval English literature, Victorian literature, colonial and post-colonial literature, 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century Bangla literature, Translation Studies. She has



published several articles and edited the book, *Nineteenth Century Poetry and Prose* (2002), Macmillan. She is currently engaged in translating some short stories of Ashapura Devi. Her address: AE 794, Salt Lake, Sector I, Kolkata - 700064  
E-mail: sjharna@satyam.net.in.

DR. A.G. KHAN is Reader and Head of the Dept of English at "School of Studies in English", Vikram University, Ujjain, Madhya Pradesh. He has authored one book and co-edited two books. He has translated Late N.P. Mohammad's '*Maram*' (Malayalam) into Hindi from its English version. He was the coordinator of the International Seminar entitled the *Muse & Minorities* (1996) at India International Centre, New Delhi. The proceedings of this seminar were presented to Dr. K.R. Narayanan, the then President at the Rashtrapati Bhavan (1998). His address: B - 14/20, Mahananda Nagar, Ujjain, Madhya Pradesh- 456 010

MADHAVI APTE is currently teaching Linguistics and Applied Linguistics to post graduate students at Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Marathwada University, Aurangabad, India. Her interests comprise creative writing as well as translation from Marathi (her mother tongue) into English and vice-versa. Besides her research and journalistic publications (several papers plus

edited books) she has, to her credit, several creative writings including a short story, several poetic and short story translations, including the book, *Goodharamya Emily* (translated poems of Emily Dickinson). She writes both in English and Marathi. At present, she is busy with a project on translating short stories of Nobel Prize winners from English into Marathi.

DR. MEENA T PILLAI works as a Senior Lecturer in the Dept of English, Sree Sankaracharya University of Sanskrit, Regional center, Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala. She was a Fulbright Fellow to Ohio State University, Columbus, Shastri Fellow to Concordia University, Montreal, Commonwealth Fellow to the University of Sussex, Brighton. Areas of research: Women's Studies and Media Studies. E-mail: meenatpl@yahoo.com

DR. PRIYADARSHI PATNAIK is an *Assistant Professor at* Department of Humanities & Social Sciences, Indian Institute of Technology, Kharagpur 721 392, India. His specializations include Indian aesthetics, media studies and visual culture. Patnaik has two books of poems and a book of criticism to his credit. He has published both critical papers and creative writings and paintings in journals like *Indian Literature*, *New Quest*, *New Literary History*, *Toronto Review*, *Oyster Body Review*, *Ariel*, *Still*, etc., both in India and Abroad. His interests include painting, graphics and music (flute).

E-mail: priyadarshi1@yahoo.com

DR. PURABI PANWAR works for Maya Publishers Pvt Ltd.

She is a frequent contributor to leading dailies and literary journals. She has contributed features, reviews and interviews in areas related to literature, travel and women. She has authored several books like "India in the works of Kipling, Forster and Naipaul (Pencraft International 2000)", "A Monograph on V.S. Naipaul (Indira Gandhi National Open University, 2001)", and "V.S. Naipaul: An Anthology of Recent Criticism (Pencraft International, 2003). Her interests are reading, travelling and meeting people. Her address is 113-B, Shahpur Jat New Delhi – 110049  
E-mail: surit@del2.vsnl.net.in

MR. M. K. RAGHAVENDRA is an eminent film critic. He freelances, and was a Homi Baba Fellow. He has won the national Swarna Kamal award for film criticism. His address is 760, 37<sup>th</sup> Cross, IVBlock 'T', Jayanagar, Bangalore - 560 012  
E-mail: mkragh@bgl.vsnl.net.in

DR. T.S.SATYANATH works as an Associate Professor in the Dept of Modern Indian Languages & Literary Studies, University of Delhi, Delhi – 1100077 (Tel.: 011-27666626 (off.); 27666127 (res.)) He teaches Kannada and Comparative Indian Literature at the Department of Modern Indian

Languages and Literary Studies, University of Delhi. Comparative Indian Literature, Folklore Studies, Cultural Studies and Translation Studies are his areas of interest.

E-mail: satyanath@vsnl.co.uk;

satyanath@vsnl.net; satya@du.ac.in

DR.SOMDATTA MANDAL teaches at the Department of English & Other Modern European Languages, Visva-Bharati University, Santiniketan. A Fulbright scholar, she has published in journals and books of national and international repute. Among some of her editorial ventures are F. Scott Fitzgerald: A Centennial Tribute Vols I & II (1997); William Faulkner: A Centennial Tribute (1999); The Diasporic Imagination: Asian American Writing (3 vols) (2000); The American Literary Mosaic (co-editor, 2003); The Ernest Hemingway Companion (2003) and Cross-Cultural Transactions in Multi-Ethnic Literatures of the United States (co-editor). Her recent published book is Reflections, Refractions and Rejections: Three American Writers and the Celluloid World (2004). She has received several scholarships and awards, including the British Council Charles Wallace Trust Scholarship, the Salzburg Seminar Fellowship, and the Rockefeller Foundation Fellowship at Bellagio.

E-mail: smandal@vsnl.net

MS. SWATI GANGULY is a Senior lecturer in English at the Department of English and other Modern



European languages, Visva-Bharati, Santiniketan, West Bengal. Her areas of interest are: Translation Studies, Renaissance Studies, Film and Theatre Studies, Gender Studies with special emphasis on Feminist Theory and Women's Writing.

E-mail: [swati33\\_g@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:swati33_g@yahoo.co.uk)

PROFESSOR. TUTUN MUKHERJEE works as a Professor in English, Osmania University, P.G. College, S.P. Road, Secundarabad-500 003, Andhra Pradesh. She has published widely in the areas of her current interest, viz. Translation, Women's Writing, Theatre and Film Studies. Her books on translation are: "Translation: From Periphery to Centrestage"; "Mindscapes: Short Stories of Premendra Mitra"; "Twilight of the Mind". Forthcoming are the translation of: plays by women as "Acts of Resistance" and Nabaneeta Dev Sen's novella as "Winter - Defiant Autumn world".

E-mail: [tms3india@yahoo.co.in](mailto:tms3india@yahoo.co.in)

Edited by

UDAYA NARAYANA SINGH & P.P. GIRIDHAR

Guest Editor

ANJALI GERA ROY

## ARTICLES:

- 'Plagiarizing' For Bollywood - M.K. Raghavendra
- Not Speaking A Language That Is Mine - Anjali Gera Roy
- How Does Shakespeare Become *Śekh Pīr* In Kannada - T.S. Satyanath
- Translation As Dissemination: A Note From An Academic And Translator From Bengal - Swati Ganguly
- Vernacular Dressing And English Re-Dressings: Translating *Neel Darpan* - Jharna Sanyal
- Post-Colonial Translation: Globalizing Literature? - Purabi Panwar
- Translating The Nation, Translating The Subaltern - Meena T. Pillai
- Translation, Transmutation, Transformation: A Short Reflection On The Indian Kala Tradition - Priyadarshi Patnaik
- Translation: A Cultural Slide Show - B. Hariharan
- The Hidden Rhythms And Tensions Of The Subtext: The Problems Of Cultural Transference In Translation - Tutun Mukherjee
- Of Defining And Redefining An 'Ideal' Translator: Problems And Possibilities - Somadatta Mandal

## TRANSLATION REVIEWS

- Burning Ground: Singed Souls - A.G. Khan
- Translation: Where Angels Fear To Tread - A.G. Khan
- Translation Of "Pachola" [Marathi] Into "Fall" [English] - Madhavi Apte



## TRANSLATION TODAY

### ORDER FORM

Please find enclosed herewith a demand draft for INR / USD / EURO  
..... as my/ our subscription for one / two issues of  
Translation Today .

Name .....  
Profession .....  
Address .....  
.....

Phone: .....

e-mail: .....

PIN

--	--	--	--	--	--

Signature & Date : .....

### SUBSCRIPTION DETAILS

#### Individuals

##### INDIA

Single Issue : INR 100 (add INR 25/- for registered post)

Two Issues : INR 200 (add INR 50/- for registered post)

##### OVERSEAS

Single Issue: USD - 30 \$

Two Issues: USD - 40 \$

#### Institutions

##### INDIA

Two Issues: INR 350 (add INR 50/- for registered post)

##### OVERSEAS

Two Issues: USD - 80 \$

Payment has to be made by demand draft. Drafts should be in favour of AD(A)/Editor,  
Translation Today, Mysore, payable in Mysore and should be posted to the following address:

**Asst. Director (Admn)**

Translation Today

Central Institute of Indian Languages

Hunsur Road, Manasagangotri

Mysore: -570006. INDIA

Contributors are requested to contact Dr P.P.Giridhar on behalf of the Editorial Board with a brief summary of their submission so as to avoid duplication. Articles submitted for consideration of the Board will have to be in English. Translation Today will consider seriously the possibility of publishing material in Indian languages, or a multilingual edition of the journal in future. There's no size limitation on articles except that they may preferably be within 40K to avoid slow downloading for the electronic version. Articles should, however, be preferably between 2000 and 3000 words in length for the print-based version. Unpublished contributions will be preferred. While submitting pieces already published elsewhere, the author must mention the fact as well as get permission to reproduce the same. Your initial submission should be in typescript or by e-mail, or in a three and half inch floppy disk. For electronic submissions, use Microsoft Word (6.0) (.doc or .txt) format. Graphics could be in JPEG, GIF, Photoshop or BMP format.

Four copies of the typescript must be submitted. This is to facilitate reviewing. The first page of the top copy only should include the title, author's name and institutional affiliation and an abstract of not more than 100 words in length. The last page of the top copy only should include the author's name, position, affiliation and contact information (postal address, fax and telephone numbers and e-mail). The other three copies should be copied on both sides of the page. Submissions should be double spaced with generous margins.

A colour photograph of the author(s) is needed in electronic and hardcopy form. Endnotes, where essential, shall precede bibliography at the end. Superscripted references within the text to endnotes and bibliography may be hyperlinked in the electronic version.

Contributors would get ten offprints of their contribution.

#### **Style and conventions:**

**References** should follow the system as exemplified in this journal. In the typescript, references should be indicated by giving the author's name and year of publication (with page references where necessary). References should be listed in full at the end of the article, in alphabetical order and without abbreviating journal title. References to more than one publication by an author in the same year should be distinguished alphabetically with small letters. For example: According to Nida (1994a, 1994b).

**Diagrams and figures** should be suitable for photographic/scanner reproduction. Drawings should be in black ink or stiff white paper. Lettering should be of draughtsman standard and large enough to remain legible where the figure requires reduction in size. Tables should be typed on separate sheets. Indicate in the text where tables should be placed.



Edited by  
**UDAYA NARAYANA SINGH & P.P. GIRIDHAR**

Guest Editor  
**ANJALI GERA ROY**

### **ARTICLES:**

- 'Plagiarizing' For Bollywood - M.K. Raghavendra
- Not Speaking A Language That Is Mine - Anjali Gera Roy
- How Does Shakespeare Become *Śekh Pīr* In Kannada - T.S. Satyanath
- Translation As Dissemination: A Note From An Academic And Translator From Bengal - Swati Ganguly
- Vernacular Dressing And English Re-Dressings: Translating *Neel Darpan* - Jharna Sanyal
- Post-Colonial Translation: Globalizing Literature? - Purabi Panwar
- Translating The Nation, Translating The Subaltern - Meena T. Pillai
- Translation, Transmutation, Transformation: A Short Reflection On The Indian Kala Tradition - Priyadarshi Patnaik
- Translation: A Cultural Slide Show - B. Hariharan
- The Hidden Rhythms And Tensions Of The Subtext: The Problems Of Cultural Transference In Translation - Tutun Mukherjee
- Of Defining And Redefining An 'Ideal' Translator: Problems And Possibilities - Somadatta Mandal

### **TRANSLATION REVIEWS**

- Burning Ground: Singed Souls - A.G. Khan
- Translation: Where Angels Fear To Tread - A.G. Khan
- Translation Of "Pachola" [Marathi] Into "Fall" [English] - Madhavi Apte